

Imperialist Hands Off Iraq!



Leon Trotsky
Revolutionary
fighter and
strategist p.6

Recovering Connolly? p.10

Fighting the PNR p.3

•Iraq •GDR •S.Africa

The Imperialists are ready for war in the middle east. Over a hundred thousand US combat troops are mobilised on the borders of Kuwait and Iraq, protected by the might of the US Navy and airforce and by ships, planes and troops from the major powers.

By mid-October the US expects to be ready to launch a full attack, egged on by the mouthpiece of US capitalism, the *Wall Street Journal*, which called for war in two savage editorials.

The USSR has collaborated fully and is under pressure to support US policy as a condition for any of Gorbachev's hoped-for economic aid from the West. The UN, the thieves' kitchen of the imperialists, is holding 14 million Iraqis hostage with a blockade aimed to starve them, to weaken Iraq, and, most importantly, to create conditions in which US measures to 'enforce' it can provide the excuse for a military offensive against Saddam Hussein.

Thatcher and Hurd made it clear in the emergency Commons session that they would not feel bound to seek UN authority to step up military action!

Saddam Hussein's lurid record as a dictator, as the perpetrator of poison gas attacks against the Kurds, as a latter day Hitler, are now suddenly given full media coverage.

The stinking hypocrisy of these sudden discoveries is obvious after a moment's thought. Britain, the USA, Ja-

pan and the Kremlin have been arming and trading with this supposed monster for decades.

The willingness of the USA, supported by Thatcher, to launch an all-out war has only one aim—to protect and expand their economic interests in the Gulf. Workers and all anti-imperialist forces world-wide have a direct interest in seeing that they do not succeed.

None of Iraq's aims in annexing Kuwait constitute a genuine anti-imperialist struggle. It wished to present the imperialists with a *fait accompli*. It wanted to prove itself to be the dominant regional power which imperialism would have to come to terms with and work through to achieve stability in the Gulf and ensure its continued exploitation of the area's vast oil reserves.

UNDERESTIMATED

But, like Galtieri over the Malvinas (Falklands), Saddam has underestimated the imperialist powers' reaction to being despoiled of any of "their" possessions lest it encourage others to try similar actions. US imperialism must recover Kuwait.

To fail to do so will be a tremendous demonstration of weakness that would fatally undermine its world policeman role. If unchecked, by the end of the century Iraq will be more economically powerful and have an enhanced military capability. For imperialism and Israel now is the time to check Hussein's regional ambitions—by war if necessary.

Socialists should oppose the invasion and annexation of Ku-

wait. Forcible annexations, against the will of the population cannot be a basis for uniting the Arab and non-Arab peoples of the Middle East against imperialism. Rather such actions give imperialism a pretext to intervene and to gather support from other oppressed semi-colonial regimes for this intervention. Therefore, in Iraq revolutionaries should have opposed the invasion.

However, once the US troops were sent to Saudi the nature of the conflict changed its character. The adoption of an economic blockade accompanied by military skirmishes is a direct prelude to war.

The build up of forces in Saudi Arabia has created the certainty that any Iraqi withdrawal would be followed immediately by a US/British occupation of Kuwait. The result for the Kuwaiti people at the level of democratic rights would be just as bad as the Iraqi dictatorship—witness the "democratic rights" that exist in Panama under US occupation.

But this occupation would have an even more reactionary consequence for the masses of the whole region. It would create a vast new military base for imperialism to "police" the whole region, enforcing "its in-

terests" in the Iranian and Iraqi oilfields as well as those of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates. Therefore, revolutionaries must now subordinate the call for the withdrawal of Iraqi troops to the fight for the withdrawal of all imperialist troops from the Gulf area, and until all imperialist troops are withdrawn we no longer raise this demand.

OVERTHROW

Whilst it remains the duty of revolutionaries in Iraq to continue to struggle to overthrow Saddam Hussein they must combine this strategic objective with a readiness to defend Iraq against imperialist attack. This applies to revolutionaries in Kuwait.

Any fighting here will have the character of being simply a part of a general conflict between a semi-colonial regime exploited and oppressed by imperialism and the mightiest imperialist army on earth.

Revolutionaries world-wide must not only oppose the blockade, the war preparations, but on the outbreak of hostilities must call clearly and unequivocally for the defeat of US and British imperialism and for the victory of the Iraqi forces.

We must fight for working class and democratic forces world-wide to take class struggle actions against imperialism which aid the Iraqi resistance.

In Iraq revolutionaries must mobilise the masses around genuine anti-imperialist, democratic and class slogans. If war with imperialism breaks out then for Iraqi revolutionaries any concrete opportunity for insurrection against Saddam's regime must be subordinated to the tasks of defeating the imperialist onslaught. But it is possible that this Bonapartist dictator on behalf of capital might all-too-readily surrender Iraq to imperialism if that is the only way to salvage the interests of the ruling elite. In such circumstances an insurrection against him might prove necessary to prevent surrender to imperialism.

In the event of a defeat for Saddam and his regime revolutionaries must seek to grasp the opportunity to overthrow the Ba'athist dictatorship and replace it with a genuine anti-imperialist workers' and peasants' government.

As long as Saddam Hussein poses as an anti-imperialist war-leader revolutionaries should demand the expropria-

tion of all imperialist property in Iraq and Kuwait, the universal arming of the people, the granting of full democratic rights to the Iraqi and Kuwaiti masses including the withdrawal of all Iraqi troops from Kurdistan.

We call on all workers everywhere to refuse to implement sanctions against Iraq.

- Break the blockade.
- Down with the imperialist war preparations
- All US, British and other imperialist troops out of the Gulf
- For the defeat of imperialist forces in any war and for the victory of Iraq
- Soldiers of the Arab League turn your guns on imperialism. For a revolutionary war against imperialism
- Down with the emirs and kings of the Arabian Peninsula—stooges and tools of imperialism
- Down with Saddam Hussein and the other Bonapartist regimes of the region
- For self-determination for all who live and work in Kuwait
- For a socialist united states of the Middle East



EDITORIAL

Workers' Action Can Stop Extradition

ON JULY 30, in the High Court, Justice Hamilton rejected the appeal of Dessie Ellis against his extradition to Britain. Ellis' was the first case to challenge the '87 Extradition Act. Hamilton surprised legal observers by bringing back into play the McGlinchy judgement, which many thought was superseded by the Supreme Court ruling which freed Des Finucane.

But in reaffirming the McGlinchy judgement Hamilton was only doing the bidding of his masters—the Irish bourgeoisie. Haughey, unlike the liberal lawyers was not surprised by Hamilton's verdict. Long before the verdict he reassured Thatcher that she needn't fear a chain of Finucane cases from his 1987 Act. Haughey was right: the judiciary has shown its willingness to do as it was expected.

The Dessie Ellis verdict means that the weakness in the extradition mechanism, shown on the Finucane case, is now redressed. From now on a smoother more speedy operation of the extradition conveyor belt is to be expected. Faced with this fact, what has been the action of Sinn Féin? It has reaffirmed the failed perspective of lobbying 26 county politicians—and especially Fianna Failers—which has been the hallmark of Sinn Féin extradition politics since the foundation of the Irish Anti-Extradition Campaign in February 1988.

Expropriate and Nationalise Goodman!

THE SPECTACLE of Haughey and O'Malley coming to the rescue of Larry Goodman was surpassed in its contempt for workers by Labour and Workers' Party willing support for the new law to save the bosses from foreclosure by creditors—instead of using the Dáil to in any way argue for the independent interests of the workers.

Nothing could give a clearer illustration of how these two-faced pro-capitalist parties of the working class 'defend' workers' interests—defend the bosses to 'protect' jobs! The Workers' Party went so far as to demand that the state give new funds to Goodman 'to protect jobs'! Even Spring could not stomach that! Whatever the uncertain future of Goodman, however, we can be absolute in asserting that the workers' interests are in no way protected by the new Companies Bill.

Not that Spring and Rabbitté held back on their execrations of Goodman and his cronies in the cabinet. Bourgeois journalists were in admiration at the vigour of their rhetoric. But in the heel of the hunt both of these champions of the Irish worker voted with conviction for a bill to save Goodman from the banks, and raised no fight on behalf of the workers. Meanwhile outside the gates of the Dáil the Gateaux workforce, fighting mass redundancies and already written off by both DeRossa and Spring, did not merit even the usual hypocrisies of a question to the Minister!

Labour in 1987 and Workers Party in 1989, in their rush for respectability in the post-Thatcher world of 'new realism', made it an article of their programme to ditch the traditional left, and even reformist demands for the nationalisation of major companies fundamental to the 'public interest'.

Published by the Irish Workers' Group, Irish section of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI)
12 Langrishe Place, Dublin 1, Ireland.

"All the parties in Leinster House are vulnerable to pressure on this vital issue, but no one more so than Fianna Fail, whose Ard Fheis only this year passed a resolution against political extradition. This was of course ignored by the leadership. But Haughey and Lenihan must not be allowed to ignore the broad opposition among Irish people to the sending of our citizens to face political charges in British courts." (An Phoblacht editorial 6.9.90)

This perspective has been tried in several recent elections, at meetings of Fianna Fail Cummainn and at Fianna Fail Ard Fheiseanna. It has failed totally to stop or even abate repression or extraditions.

Faced with this, activists who have been assembled around the Irish Anti-Extradition Campaign need to relaunch the campaign on a new basis of mass action against extradition and repression, centred on workers action as the key.

In order to relaunch the Irish Anti-Extradition Campaign on this new road we need an open democratic conference of the Campaign now—open to everyone willing to fight repression, smash the extradition laws and stop extraditions. We call on the Executive of the Irish Anti-Extradition Campaign to convene and rally such a conference as a matter of urgency.■

For socialists, however, there is no other adequate response to the needs of a large workforce than to argue for the fight for nationalisation of such companies, but under workers' control, and without any compensation to the bosses.

The capitalist state must be forced in struggle to expropriate such individual capitalists. When a major private agribusiness corporation, with profits swollen by direct State aid and proven political corruption, collapses through the sheer adventurism and greed of its bosses, the possibilities of popularising this slogan are greatly enhanced.

Such a fight is opposed, however, not just by the bourgeois Labour and Workers Party TDs. Their siamese twins in the unions, Cassells, Attley, Browne and Flynn, equally see their own salvation in protecting leeches like Goodman. After all, one of the central planks of their PNR deal with Haughey was to expand the food processing industry through the kind of aid which Haughey dished out both 'legally' and illegally to Goodman.

Socialists argue for such a fight for expropriation and nationalisation in the certainty that it is the only response which, if fought for, can hope to protect the jobs of the workers involved. But we are equally certain that such a demand, if taken up and fought for with widespread solidarity, would begin to challenge fundamentally the rights of capitalist 'private property'.

Popularising such forms of struggle among workers begins to build a bridge between the limited defensive struggles of trade unionism and the only effective answer to the endless cycle of attacks on workers' livelihoods—the economic and political struggle to smash and replace capitalism and its state.■



Students opposing cuts break through police barrier in Kildare Street, Dublin.

Action Programme for Students

The last college year saw major conflict between the student movement and the state over women's right to information about abortion. It was a struggle with many hard lessons for the future but which also revealed major divisions within and between student unions, divisions fomented by backwoods reactionaries and right-wing caucuses of students.

The relative influence of such forces among Irish students is hardly surprising. Third-level education is overwhelmingly dominated by the families of the ruling class, big farmers and professionals. Representation of the working class and rural poor—the vast majority of the population—is outrageously low and has actually declined in the universities since the mid 1970s.

Nevertheless the vast majority of students from the privileged classes, in seeking personal independence and development, in colleges find themselves (perhaps for the only time in their lives) relatively open to the possibility of breaking from the class interests in which they were raised. For this reason student movements have, time and again, fought for progressive causes and alongside the working class struggles for democratic rights or against capitalism and imperialism.

But the possibility of winning any real gains in struggle depends entirely upon working out a clear line of march and sharp demands. Above all it depends on electing leaders who can be made to carry out a fighting mandate under full accountability to and immediate recall by the rank and file.

Socialists and activists need to convene meetings of the most active students urgently to hammer out the key local and national objectives around which to mobilise their unions. Here we summarise what we believe should be the essential positions to fight for on some of the key issues.

Student grants have remained the most burning issue since USI was launched 25 years ago. Mass struggles then won a token grants scheme in the Republic which still remained far behind the British system. Now Thatcher has savaged the provision for Brit-

ish students and is bent on inflicting loans on them. Students must once again build a fighting campaign, drawing in also the organised labour movement:

*For a living grant for all (to cover full living-away costs and all fees, books etc.), indexed to inflation and without a means test or discriminatory academic requirements.

*Mass action now against the Tory loan system in the North.

*Freeze all fees now as a step towards their abolition for both Irish and foreign students!

Cuts in public spending have meant that vacancies for teaching and other educational workers are not being filled, canteen and library services meet only a fraction of the need etc.

*For occupations, strikes and demos against all cuts.

*Against all privatisation of any college activities and for the nationalisation without compensation of all private campus services under workers and students control.

The virtual absence of student hostels from southern campuses and their meagre provision in the North has always placed the Irish student at the mercy of rapacious landlords exacting outlandish rents for often degrading accommodation. This has now worsened by the escalation of house prices. In the South this year sees a dramatic new shortage of accommodation for students:

*Freeze and reduce the price of digs and rented accommodation. For mass student action in each town, with support from workers and trades councils, to impose a charter of student accommodation rights and standards

*For a massive scheme of publicly owned student hostels to be run under student control, to be built as a scheme of useful public works by direct trade union labour.

*Organise a boycott of the elitist hostels now being launched e.g. Baile na Coirbe, to drive down their prices as a step to their nationalisation without 'compensation for lost rents'.

Added to the worsening conditions for students in general

is the specific oppression of women. A renewed fighting students movement must take up these demands:

*For free creches under worker and student control.

*For open availability of all forms of contraception on every campus with free medical back up services and abortion information.

*Defend student leaders victimised by the courts for providing abortion information. Mobilise to force the state to cancel the massive court costs! Student unions must defy the courts by providing abortion information!

*Open up the struggle to decriminalise abortion in Ireland. Mobilise to force the ruling class to scrap the 1861 Act and the 8th Amendment. Nothing less than free legal abortion on demand can guarantee a woman's right to choose.

*For recognition and defence of lesbian and gay societies in campuses. Fight for full decriminalisation of lesbian and gay relations. Scrap the 1861 Act!

Repression, special juryless courts, emergency laws, imprisonment and extradition for political activities, and ever wider activity by the political police of the Special Branch are all major threats to fundamental democratic freedoms. Students must be won to oppose all these forms of state repression wherever they are used. In particularly activists should seek to mobilise students in national campaigns e.g. to end extradition.

Student unions North and South are crippled by ineffective federalist structures. They must be transformed into democratic fighting organisations capable of real unity in struggles and real accountability to the rank and file.

At local level the fight must be to put all student leaders and policy under the control of direct democracy at General Meetings.

Fight against the use of referenda which simply surrender the struggle to the most passive elements who do not attend the mass meetings and are insulated from the democratic debate that is essential in mobilising struggle against the tide.■

Solidarity Now With The Gateaux Workers

FACED WITH THE decision of the Lyons Group/Gateaux to close down their bakery and distribute imported cakes, with the loss of hundreds of jobs, the workers have courageously refused to give in or accept the sackings that sparked off their strike.

On Saturday Sept 1st the strikers and the Gateaux Support Group marched to the GPO where leader of the strike committee leader introduced speakers from the Bakers Union, the Trades Council, the ICTU and the support group, rounded off with fine songs of trade union struggle and James Connolly.

The Trades Council and ICTU reps made the usual empty pledges of 'support' which they never deliver on. It emphasises once more the importance of demanding from bodies like the DCTU that they circulate the

thousands of shop stewards in Dublin—which they never bother to do—with the call to bring out their members on the streets for such solidarity action. A polite hearing was given to Shanley, the Bakers' union official who had made disgraceful attacks on *Militant* for their involvement in the support group. But the most powerful appeal came from the workers own activists, letters of solidarity read out from unemployed donors, and the leader of the Waterford Crystal strikers who had loaned the Gateaux workers a bus and made the biggest donations to their funds.

Of the left groups supporting the demonstration (which included no groups from Labour, Workers' Party or CP), the IWG alone carried slogans calling for occupation of the factory and the fight to nationalise it,

without compensation, under workers' control—and to demand of Labour and Workers' parties to take up this fight. In fact de Rossa—the TD for the factory area of Finglas—sold out the strikers by opposing the solidarity group and urging "concentrate...on the priorities for all those concerned with the welfare of the Gateaux workforce—the negotiation of the best possible redundancy package". Dick Spring also joined in publicly attacking *Militant* involvement in the strike—rather than supporting the strikers.

The key to any victory for these strikers clearly lies in solidarity action. Workplace collections must be urgently organised to help them. 230 have been on official strike since June 2nd.

They have called for a

boycott of all Lyons/Gateaux products. This needs to be organised for among workers connected with handling Lyons' goods; but what must absolutely be blacked, with international action, is any substitution of imported cakes for the jobs of the

Gateaux workers!

In the last analysis, faced with closure of a plant and the loss of skills they have built up over 40 years, solidarity action alone can give encouragement to the strikers at this stage to fight

for direct action against the exploiters. That means occupation of the plant, fighting to open the books to workers' inspection, and demanding that Gateaux be expropriated and nationalised under workers' control.



Build the Campaign Against a New PNR! Fight to build a Rank and File movement!

TRADE UNIONISTS and Unemployed Against the PNR is a new campaign sponsored by hundreds of shop stewards throughout the trade unions. It seeks to unite the broadest sections of the rank and file against any new deal on wages with the Dublin government, such as the present PNR.

It puts forward a charter of alternative demands for substantial wage claims, against redundancies and rationalisations. It calls for taxes on profits, restoration of the cuts, a national minimum wage, equal pay and opposition to restrictive labour legislation and privatisation. It calls particularly for solidarity with groups of workers in struggle.

Over the summer months the campaign was faced with the struggle of the Waterford and Dungarvan Crystal workers and the Gateaux workers' strike and many of the TUUAP activists got involved in the committees for solidarity action with these workers. Nevertheless the TUUAP itself has not developed any workplace affiliations even from these workplace groups to which it gave solidarity in struggle.

What Perspective Beyond November?

A real choice looms over what direction and perspective the new campaign will adopt. Will it remain a series of committees of a few activists, with many names on its list of sponsors who would merely distribute its leaflets, but with no real roots in terms of affiliated workplaces or trade union branches? Will it simply produce leaflets, hold a few meetings, demonstrate at the ICTU conference and then fade away after the wage round has been decided one way or the other, having helped to sway

the national ballots to some degree against further collaboration with Haughey. Such was the pattern of previous campaigns?

On the other hand, this campaign could pursue the fight against a new deal in such a way as to build the basis for a more permanent and wider movement to challenge the trade union bureaucracy, to struggle to transform the trade unions into a fighting democratic movement of opposition to capitalism.

That is to say, it could openly declare as its aim to draw in affiliated workplace groups in the campaign around the immediate issue, calling on them to help build a campaign which will not go away after the national ballots. It would openly declare its intention to convene further conferences towards building a rank and file movement to turn the tide back on two decades of collaboration by the unions with wage restraint and government policies at working class expense.

The Centrist Position

The experience of fighting for such an alternative perspective in past campaigns has been negative. It has been openly opposed not so much by worker activists but by political activists in centrist groups who have by and large claimed that they agreed with the objective but claiming that by stating it openly it would put activists off and undermine the immediate issue. This position has generally taken refuge in the illusion that a single issue campaign—with a little success and a bit of luck—might automatically grow over into something bigger.

We disagree, and we believe repeated experience has proven the contrary. If anything, workers

confronted now with the call to reject a deal like the PNR will naturally want to see some sign of determination to fight for a comprehensive and ongoing alternative.

Making the Alternative Real

The strongest argument of the bureaucrats for 'orderly' centralised wage rounds (wage restraint) has been to claim that the only alternative is a "free-for-all" which in reality would be "free for some", meaning that the strongest sections would win increases and the weaker would go to the wall. Their strongest weapon is to play upon divisions and the apparent absence of any organised nucleus for an alternative struggle that would make 'free collective bargaining' a means of advance for working class interests across the board.

The alternatives to the PNR put forward by the campaign must already provoke the question from any trade union member—Who is going to organise the fight for its whole charter of demands when we are faced with a hostile union leadership?

We believe that the campaign should openly debate this question of *where are we going*. It should put such a perspective into its leaflets right from the start. And it should galvanise its activists on this basis to begin the difficult fight now for the affiliation of workplace groups—and any official bodies possible, to build such a movement. Its precise goals of struggle, for an alternative to class collaboration, would be debated out democratically in further conferences with increasingly representative delegates.

This method can strengthen the campaign around the immediate issue as well as lay

a basis for a real fighting movement in the future.

Building a Rank and File Movement

The struggles of millions of workers internationally within bureaucratized trade unions in this century has taught many lessons, and none more relevant than the experience of the 'Minority Movement' in the British trade unions in the '20s. This was essentially a united front of hundreds of thousands of workers across different unions, committed to militant struggle for their real needs, without depending on the two-faced union officials. Their motto was—'with the officials where possible, against them when necessary'. No trust was placed in the bureaucracy, but at the same time they always made a point of forcing the officials to fight—or else be exposed for their role, thus winning the trust of the ranks to an anti-capitalist alternative.

Workplace democratic control of the struggle was central to their action programme, and it remains a vital issue now. It is one which is remarkable by its absence so far from the programme of the TUUAP campaign. Yet in the conditions of a mega-union like SIPTU openly trampling on elementary union democracy, it is an issue which, if we take it up alongside the PNR issue, can greatly strengthen our appeal immediately.

Fighting for Our Real Needs

The lack of any long-term organisational perspective for a fightback, so far, in TUUAP, gives a very passive and timid character to the 'alternative' demands which it puts forward. They are listed in a rather abstract manner, like a charter of things we would wish for rather

than a call to action. And they do not assert clearly enough the real needs of the working class.

Two examples are their call to 'implement the recommendations of the Commission on Social Welfare' and the demand for a minimum wage of only £130. The former is a cosmetic hotch potch of questionable 'improvements' in social welfare by a Government body which would leave welfare recipients living below the poverty line. And as for the minimum wage—why should we not demand a living wage as the minimum? Capitalist industry itself tells us the value of labour power, the actual cost of living for a worker. It is the male average industrial wage. That, and nothing less, should be the minimum we fight for. Ridiculous, say the centrists, you'll never win that, while they nevertheless claim themselves to be fighting for the socialist paradise!

But the only way forward for the working class is to state what we need and leave the question of how much we actually win in the short term to be decided by the struggle for our needs.

Build the Campaign

The IWG will fight for democratic debate on these questions, and for our perspective in this campaign. At the same time, even if it refuses to go beyond the positions with which it was initiated, we will still fight for a victory for its limited aims.

The role of socialists remains, however, to support such united fronts in struggle, while fighting to give them a perspective that links the immediate issue to the real needs of the working class.

That means fighting to build a

mass united front of struggle among trade unionists and unemployed around an action programme which directly confronts the power of the ruling class.

The Political Perspective

Such a road of democratic debate in the course of actual struggle, is the only one whereby working class activists can develop a class struggle alternative to bureaucratic trade unionism. Only a fight along these lines can ultimately win the best fighters to build a new party of struggle against capitalism. For, if the struggle remains non-political, however radical or heroic, it will fail to confront the real obstacles—the rule of the capitalist class.

But political questions are not something that arise only later in the struggle. They are posed immediately the nature of union collaboration with the state and also by the existence of two 'parties of the working class' which are a vital component of the very class collaboration which this campaign seeks to oppose. In all our struggles we must not cease to win the unions the demand of Labour and the Workers' Party that they defend and promote the struggles of the rank and file, the unemployed and the working class communities.

We are certain that the result of such a method will be to win away whatever worthwhile elements survive in the ranks of those parties and to expose in practice to the rank and file their bankrupt politics—proving the urgent need to debate out what kind of party the working class really needs—and how it is to be built.

OUR PROGRAMME

From The Trotskyist Manifesto

Against Bourgeois Militarism Against Imperialist War!

THE PROLETARIAT is an international class which has no interest in defending the bourgeois nation state. In the imperialist countries workers must therefore be unswerving in their defeatism. The Leninist position developed in 1914 retains all its validity. Revolutionary defeatism is based on the principle that the main enemy of the working class is the bourgeoisie in its own country. The defeat of its "own" imperialist bourgeoisie, as a result of the revolutionary struggle of the working class for power, is a lesser evil than the victory of the ruling class as a result of class collaboration and the sacrificing of proletarian independence during the war. The social chauvinists, espousing social peace, will argue that during a war labour should bow to the needs of the "nation" by speeding up production and accepting legal restraints on the right to strike.

By contrast, we must fight for no working class participation in the war effort. The workers' organisations must turn the imperialist war into a civil war. Faced with a war against a semi-colony or a workers' state, workers must give solidarity and aid to the enemy of the imperialists. In a conflict with a workers' state, no matter how degenerate(d) and whatever the military means involved in the conflict (nuclear, biological, chemical or conventional weapons), workers must defend them against imperialist attack.

Outside the imperialist countries generalised defeatism is not the correct method with regard to all conflicts. Concrete conditions will vary and the revolutionary vanguard will have to fight for defeatism or defence depending primarily on the nature of the states conducting the war.

Within a semi-colony or degenerate workers' state in conflict with imperialism the proletariat must have a defeatist position. With regard to wars between semi-colonies (India-Pakistan) or between degenerate workers' states (China-Vietnam), workers should generally adopt a defeatist position on both sides unless it is the case that one combatant is a cat's-paw for imperialism and that the international proletariat will be strengthened by the victory of one side.

The proletariat does not defend the semi-colonies and workers' states by the same methods as the bourgeoisie or bureaucracy. The independent mobilisation of the working class is necessary to ensure international solidarity and the defeat of the imperialists.

Even where an imperialist power is in a military alliance with a workers' state, the proletariat in that imperialist country retains a defeatist position and under no conditions should suspend the class struggle. Only where the continuation of a particular action in the class struggle directly hinders the war effort of the workers' state would the proletariat suspend its action. In no way, however, would such an exceptional case signal a suspension of the policy of defeatism in relation to the imperialist war and the capitalist class. The existence of vast arsenals of nuclear warheads, of biological and of chemical weapons capable of destroying humanity several times over, rightly strikes fear into

the hearts of millions. Posed with this threat, the reformists of Social Democracy and Stalinism preach to the working class about world disarmament and the banishing of war from the planet. The question is not an abstract one of disarmament, but who is to be disarmed and by what means? The bourgeoisie will never give up its arms, without a fight. It must be forcibly disarmed by the revolutionary proletariat. To attempt to unite the workers and sections of this same bourgeoisie in a disarmament campaign is to create illusions that the bosses can be persuaded to give up the weapons they have to defend their monopoly of the means of production. In fact the negotiated agreements between the imperialists and the degenerated workers' states to reduce certain types of weapons go hand in hand with a new round of rearmament. As before the two world wars international peace conferences can be a prelude to war as each side engages in elaborate propaganda ploys to present the other as the enemy of peace.

However, wherever the pacifists lead sections of workers and the petit bourgeoisie into direct conflict which undermines the military programme of the ruling class, revolutionaries participate in such actions, whilst making clear their complete opposition to the utopian politics of the pacifists and advancing our transitional programme of demands on war and militarism.

The war industries are immensely profitable for the ruling class. We fight to expose their business secrets, to confiscate their military profits and to expropriate them and place them under workers' control. As the bourgeoisie prepares for war money and people will be pumped into the armed forces. In opposition to their obscene armaments programme we demand a programme of useful public works.

Even in times where there is no global conflict, the imperialists construct pacts and treaties in defence of their own interests, backed by the threat of military intervention. We demand the dissolution of all imperialist pacts and treaties and an end to secret diplomacy. All treaties and agreements should be exposed and published.

We place demands on the reformist bourgeois workers' parties that when in government they carry through demands that serve the interests of the class they claim to represent. We demand that they withdraw from NATO, ANZUS, SEATO, oppose military budgets and refuse to use armed force against the workers or oppressed peoples.

They must support and encourage full democratic rights for soldiers, recognise the right to set up soldiers' committees and unions, support workers' inspection and control of the barracks, abolish military conscription and recognise the right of workers to set up self-defence organisations.

We must use the progressive desire of the workers for peace to fight for such demands within the workers' movement, whilst constantly warning against the bankrupt strategy of pacifism. The only way of preventing the horrifying barbarism of a nuclear war is the international socialist revolution.■

IRISH NEWS

The book reveals not only the innovative qualities, but also the ambiguities, of Connolly's thought. It challenges the confusions in his legacy which remain at the heart of Irish revolutionary traditions... To satisfy yourself you need to read it. Whatever you have read and heard about Connolly this book is certainly food for thought and is highly recommended... It will be quoted in years to come.

THE IRISH TIMES

The book defends Connolly, albeit through rigorous criticism, and aims to achieve a better understanding of his political formation and, therefore, that of our own. Despite my obvious differences with the authors, I would argue that they succeed in the task they have set themselves. The book provokes thought and, as the authors hope, should provoke debate... This book, in a comradely way, investigates his failings not to denigrate but to respect his achievements. It is an addition to the corpus of work that endeavours to pursue his legacy in intellectual and practical terms.

TROTSKYIST INTERNATIONAL

Journal of the LRCI

£1.50 per issue
(2£ p&p from IWG)

Publishes theses and resolutions of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International

No.5 features International Perspectives—balance sheet

and prospects for the world political situation.

No.4: The Death Agony of Stalinism

No.3: Theses on Women's Oppression

No.2: Theses on Zionism, Israel, Arab Nationalism, Palestine

REVOLUTIONARY TROTSKYIST TENDENCY

San Francisco Protest

THE REVOLUTIONARY Trotskyist Tendency (RTT) is a new group on the US left. In the first issue of its journal, *International Trotskyist*, it publishes a declaration of fraternal relations with the LRCI.

The comrades are participating in the Emergency Committee to Stop US War in the Middle East established in San Francisco. Other groups involved are the Bolshevik Tendency, Socialist Action, and the Revolutionary Workers League. The political basis of this united front against the war-mongering of George Bush was agreed as: "No war for big oil—bring the troops home!, US out of the Middle East and Saudi Arabia!", as well as the weak slogan, "Money for human need, not war!"

On this basis the Committee agreed to organise a demonstration in San Francisco against the US troop build up on 28 August.■

ARBEITERINNENSTANDPUNKT

Solidarity Against US/UN

ALTHOUGH NOT directly involved in the imperialist military forces in the Gulf Austria has given full support for the US and UN actions against Iraq.

The ArbeiterInnenstandpunkt group (AST) immediately launched an initiative to unite the left in Vienna against the war threat.

As a result, on 24 August there was a meeting of thirty individuals and supporters of various left groups: the Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist League (RKL), the Austrian section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, the Initiative Against Racism, and the Solidarity Committee for Palestine were all represented.

What the Reviewers Said...

REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

... a brilliant analysis of Connolly's theory of Irish history... far superior to almost everything else written on Connolly's politics and the overall result is a book which is essential reading for any Socialist concerned with Irish politics or with campaigns of solidarity with the struggle against imperialism in Ireland.

THE LENINIST

[In a review of both IWG and Kieran Allen's book] Both are worthwhile contributions to a critical understanding of Connolly, in particular the IWG publication, which is based on a series of incisive articles in their journal *Class Struggle* back in 1984; articles which Allen seems to have used in his appraisal.

CONNAUGHT TRIBUNE

The book is published in the hope that debate will be generated around the question of Connolly's legacy. Such a debate is timely in light of the need for a coherent anti-imperialist approach to the London-Dublin entente on the North, and for those who term themselves republican socialists the debate is essential because the analysis presented here is a concerted attempt to undermine the very basis of their ideology and political programme... They state that 'the tragedy is... (Connolly) confused rather than clarified, in the most testing moment, a crucial task that faced and still faces our class'.

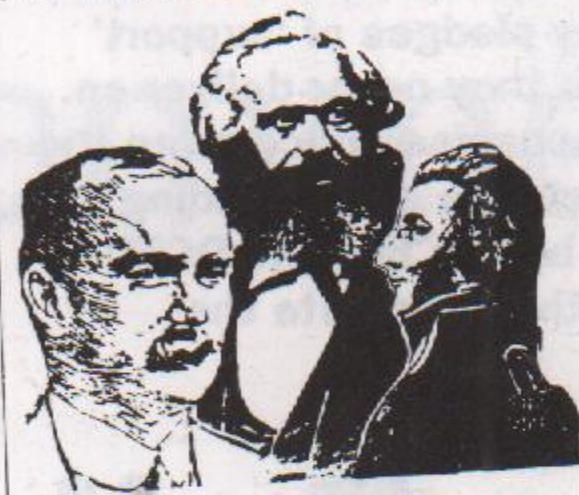
FORTNIGHT

An excellent piece of research, convincingly and coherently argued. Whether or not you agree with the thrust of its analysis, no serious student of Irish history should be without it.

This new book on James Connolly presents a systematic Marxist analysis of his politics from a standpoint free of the Stalinised 'Marxism' of previous left biographies. It challenges both nationalist and eclectic 'revisionist' views of Connolly.

CONNOLLY

A Marxist Analysis



Andy Johnston
James Larragy
Edward McWilliams

176 pages A5. On sale from April 1990 at £3.75 (IR£3.90). Or by post for £4.50 payable to IWG, c/o 12 Langrishe Place, Dublin 1

SUBSCRIBE!

To make sure you get a copy of *Class Struggle* each month, take out a subscription NOW!

To get the next ten issues send £6 (Outside Ireland and Britain send £9)

to:

J.Larkin, c/o 12 Langrishe Place, Dublin 1, Ireland.

Make payable to Class Struggle



LRCI NEWS

League for a Revolutionary Communist International

They immediately planned a protest demonstration outside America House for 30 August and agreed to form a committee—United Action Against US Intervention—to co-ordinate the work. The committee agreed to build solidarity action around the slogans: Imperialist troops out; No NATO planes over Austrian air space; Against war preparations!■

GRUPPE ARBEITERMACHT

Trotskyist summer school

MEMBERS AND sympathisers of the LRCI in Germany met in mid-August on the occasion of our first ever Berlin school. The meeting took place against a background of economic collapse and mounting discontent following the first ever restoration of capitalism in a former degenerate workers' state.

Lively discussions took place on the nature of socialism, distinct from its Stalinist and social democratic distortions, on the history and collapse of the Fourth International, and on the principles and application of the united front. On an immediate note, the school discussed how to intervene within struggles of the collective farmers (see page 11), and how to build the LRCI in what remains of the GDR and after reunification.

Overall the school was a clear success. In the context of the huge upheavals that are imminent, it brought forward the prospects for greatly expanding the German section of the LRCI and took a step forward in the re-constitution of Trotskyism in Germany.■

Twenty years have passed since the political watershed which decided the question of leadership among the aroused population of half a million Catholics in the North.

In late 1970. After two years of spontaneous mass revolt for civil rights—in which young left-wing forces had played a leading role—the SDLP emerged as the leading electoral party of the nationalists, and the Provisional IRA began to develop their guerrilla war with widespread support among the Catholic population.

The civil rights revolt had repeatedly mobilised masses of nationalists on the streets from October 1968 until the conflagrations of August 1969 forced the British to send out the army to cordon off the barricaded nationalist areas. During that whole period, and until well into 1970, there was no established leadership in the mass movement. The young left-wing forces who had been the most active in the street mobilisations failed to fight for nationwide solidarity among workers, failed during almost two years of struggle to develop *working class* forms of struggle in the civil rights agitation or to concretely pose the democratic questions of voting rights and equality in housing and jobs in class.

Not surprisingly, they failed to consolidate any support on a class basis in the north in this period and ultimately failed to provide any alternative to the traditional nationalist forces which were struggling to reconstruct themselves. Why this should have happened and where the responsibility lay on the left is analysed in *Class Struggle* no. 10 (Nov 1988).

The new ascendancy of the SDLP and the Provisionals as two antagonistic nationalist forces in the North, reflected a rebirth of nationalist consciousness. The left had failed to offer a programme that could key into the growing awareness of the Six County minority that civil rights through democratic reform was impossible within the northern state; that only the dismantling of that state could clear the way to end their oppression as nationalists.

For the new 'Provisional' IRA the means to this end was to be an armed campaign and the use of bombs to make the North ungovernable. The Republican Movement had in fact split over this question at the end of 1969. The other faction, the 'Officials' chose instead the road of democratic and social reform within the Six County state, presenting this as a "socialist" alternative.

In the absence of an alternative programme for self-organised defence of the ghettos, both factions presented themselves as armed defenders of the beleaguered nationalist population, the Officials eventually abandoning the armed struggle. The Provisionals represented the purest recrudescence of traditional revolutionary nationalism. Their early programme was sharply anti-communist, and their only defining point was a commitment to the physical-force 'strategy'. But they were increasingly presenting themselves as "the people's army", recruiting the most active youth, as an organic part, part of the resistance of the most oppressed nationalist communities—while in no way accountable to mass organisations.

When Nationalism Marginalised the Left

In mid 1970 the Provisionals' military wing claimed only 1,000 activists throughout Ireland, most of them in a support role. Attacks and harassment of the nationalist communities in Belfast by Army, RUC and loyalists soon ensured their steady growth. The 'Falls' in July 1970 is the best example. Under a 35-hour curfew, 3,000 British soldiers with landrovers and helicopter cover ransacked the Falls district, house by house, flooded it with 1,600 canisters of CS tear gas, shot 5 civilians dead, wounded 12 and arrested 300. Such attacks swelled the ranks of the IRA.

The 'Social Democratic and Labour Party' was launched in August 1970 in direct opposition to the Republicans. Despite its name, which reflected the involvement of Labour MP Paddy Devlin and Republican Labour MP Gerry Fitt, it was never a labour or social-democratic party, for it had no organic working class base or trade union connections. It regrouped traditional constitutional nationalists around the new young petit-bourgeois reformers thrown up by the civil rights struggle. These had been elected the previous year as independent MPs with a new kind of mandate—most notably John Hume. By October 1970 the SDLP had won over the last remnants of the old Nationalist Party which had abstained from official opposition within the Belfast parliament at Stormont.

In the Westminster general election of June 1970 (in which the Conservatives ousted Labour), the three anti-unionist MPs returned from the North were Gerry Fitt of the SDLP, Bernadette Devlin who had been promoted on a pan-nationalist basis by the semi-anarchist *Peoples Democracy*, and Frank MacManus who shared the Provisionals' abstentionist principle. This result reflected the still fluid nature of Six-County politics in which the new nationalist forces were struggling against each other to crystallise their support. The abstentionism of the republicans, however, severely limited their ability to challenge the SDLP with anything more than rhetoric. A pattern was to emerge whereby the most oppressed sections voted SDLP while supporting the armed struggle of the IRA.

The new party broke with the abstentionism of the old Stormont nationalists. It was founded precisely to use parliamentary channels, including Stormont, to seize the new opportunity for a constitutional struggle for a united Ireland. For such a goal seemed possible for the first time ever in the wake of the nationalist revolt which had begun to undermine the Unionist monolith and had brought the world's media to witness first-hand the cess-pit

of the sectarian state created by partition and maintained by Britain. Events were soon to explode the illusions peddled by the SDLP. In practice the 'constitutional' struggle meant repeatedly deceiving the catholic population, always defusing the mobilisations of the ghettos in order to support the Loyalist state in its war with the guerrilla fighters who had emerged as an organic part of the struggle.

The SDLP's illusions came closest to seeming fulfillment in 1973-4 when they held cabinet positions alongside the bourgeois unionist faction of Brian Faulkner in the Power-Sharing Assembly. The price of their participation was, naturally, their full support for the sectarian RUC and UDR, while successive Secretaries Whitelaw, Pym and then Labour's Rees all reneged on their private assurances that most of those interned without trial would be quickly released.

With Labour back in power in London in 1974, Merlyn Rees and Harold Wilson buckled in the face of a reactionary loyalist mass strike against the Assem-

the nationalist population that the sectarian loyalist state cannot be reformed. Its creation, its history and its institutions have made it inherently an oppressor of the minority deliberately trapped within its artificial borders and oppressed on the basis of their nationality.

Despite the eventual social radicalisation of the republicans, forced upon them by the class conditions in which they found their firmest support, despite their limited politicisation—also under pressure of the masses who began independently to mobilise in defence of the H-Block prisoners—Republican strategy remains defined by its military wing. And after the partial gain of shutting down the Stormont parliament in 1972, the military wing blindly persisted in a cul-de-sac of armed action disconnected from any involvement of the masses and not accountable to any form of mass democracy.

Counter-productive overall, the stalemated armed struggle permanently alienated many sections and reduced to spectators the Republicans' most loyal bases of support. Worst of

built up support instead of alienating it in the southern working class. And the more that *working class* forces came into play, the more would have developed the political basis for beginning to split the loyalist alliance on class lines. The small forces of the left, however, were either trailing the Republicans (as with *Peoples Democracy*) or floundering in confusion over how to relate, with a class programme, to a progressive national struggle.

Twenty years of continued war between the northern state and the most oppressed Catholic sections have witnessed many important changes, but no fundamental challenge within the nationalist population to the combined hegemony of the SDLP and the IRA, or their strategies. Socialist and independent working-class forces have failed to build the beginnings of an alternative.

But it has not only been in the North that class politics failed to rise to the challenges posed by resurgent nationalism. The same year 1970 witnessed another political watershed in the South—the collapse of the leftward political movement which had been gaining momentum throughout the sixties. In the absence of any revolutionary socialist tradition, the rapidly growing working class had turned more and more to the Labour Party and brought it to its highest levels of support ever by 1969.

The Labour Party was forced to abjure all future involvement in coalitions with capitalist parties. A new dawn seemed to loom for class politics, at least in the parliamentary arena. But in 1970, faced with the destabilisation of the whole island by a resurgent nationalist struggle, Labour somersaulted and

divided. The "Communist Party" argued for peace and for "democratisation" of the northern state as a first historic stage. The stalinised 'Officials' soon abandoned the economic nationalism and anti-imperialism which they had shared with the CP. On the road to becoming the 'Workers Party', they made their peace with Unionism and British imperialism and supported censorship and repression against their former Republican comrades.

Among the far-left, the fragmented international currents found supporters among left wing youth breaking from the Irish Labour Party and organised them in groups such as SWM. Here, too, the national question was a major point of division—mostly on tactics towards the Republicans.

In the case of *Militant*, however, which recruited among youth who remained in Labour, the legitimacy of the Republicans' struggle as a national struggle with a progressive content was denied completely.

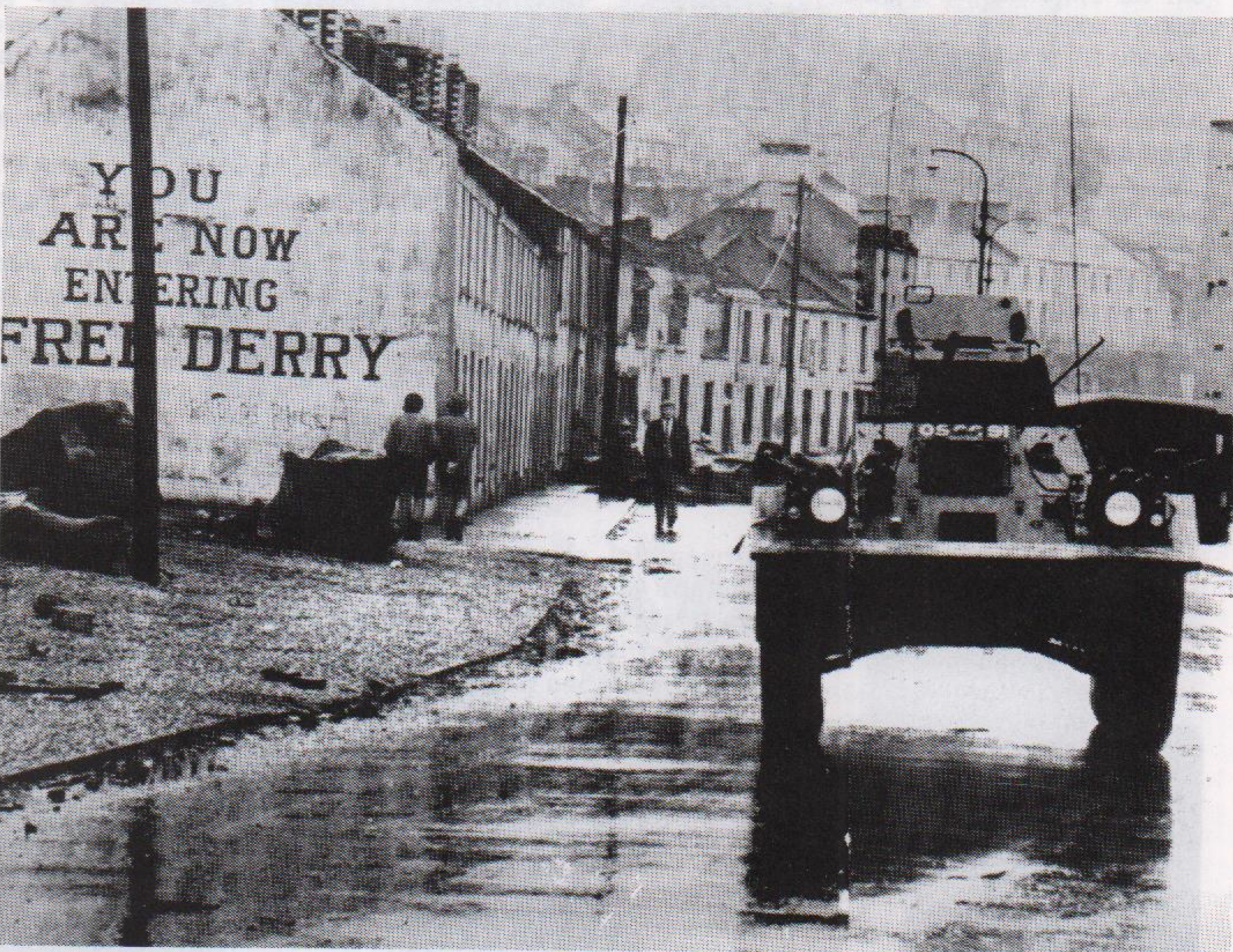
Internationally *Militant* was not alone in this attitude to the Irish question. The IWG has polemicised in the past year against two other international currents which share with *Militant* the simplistic and abstract belief that *workers' unity* is the answer in the North—as if this did not in fact beg the question of why the workers are divided in the first place. All these currents (*Militant*, the U.S.-based *Spartacists* and the French-based *Lutte Ouvrière*) inevitably therefore fall into attacking the IRA as criminals guilty of sectarianism towards the Protestant working class. This is a position which the IWG regards as a betrayal of a legitimate anti-imperialist armed struggle—however much it remains counterproductive as waged by the IRA in place of mass struggle.

The attrition of 20 years of military stalemate, the significant gain for the bourgeoisie of the Anglo-Irish Accord, with its guaranteeing of the SDLP as the major nationalist party, and the hints of Unionist softening towards accommodation with the SDLP—all reinforce a tendency on the left to relegate the national question to the ghettos of the North, to inevitable isolation and eventual containment within the imperialists' "acceptable level of violence" to be achieved through a tightening international noose of "anti-terrorism" measures.

Even while continuing to comment on the issues of repression and to make correct criticisms of the Republicans, this trend hopes instead for a spontaneous resurgence of economic struggle to break the left out of its own isolation.

But the lesson of not only 20 years, but of the 70 since the Treaty, is that the national question is bound up with all of Irish politics, and still covers over the class struggle, even in a southern society turned inside-out by international capitalism since 1957—precisely because the South also remains dominated economically in its own right by the imperialist powers, including Britain.

To close our eyes to the relevance and dangers of radical nationalism on any front of political struggle in Ireland would be to go blind, without a method of analysis or tactics, into the political battles that lie ahead. ■



Operation Motorman: the British army remove the last of the barricades in the no-go areas, 1972

bly which immediately collapsed, sending the SDLP into the political wilderness for another decade. The loyalists were especially incensed against plans for co-operation with the Republic—the nebulous and meaningless 'all-Ireland dimension' on which the SDLP had insisted as part of the package which had led to power-sharing.

If the constitutional road to a united Ireland has gone nowhere, neither has the 'strategy' of guerrilla war by the IRA. The IRA's struggle, however, has the legitimacy of basing itself upon the actual experience of

all, thousands of the most active and heroic youth, who would have been superb agitators in mobilising mass working class and community action, have been sacrificed to death, imprisonment or exhaustion for no permanent gains.

Fundamentally the Republicans failed to subordinate the legitimate tactic of armed action to the building of a democratic mass movement. Such a struggle, within which armed action would have developed, on an accountable basis, out of the necessary defensive needs of the communities, could have

pledged itself to fight for a joint government with Fine Gael which would be a better guarantor for capitalism than the party of Lynch and Haughey which was seen to be flirting with the republicans.

Labour's electoral fortunes turned steadily downwards, and by 1987 the combined vote of the divided parliamentary "left" still had not recovered to the 1969 level.

The national question impacted profoundly on all currents of the "left". Tendencies which looked to the Stalinist tradition were the most bitterly

IN JANUARY 1905 the first Russian Revolution erupted in St Petersburg and rapidly engulfed the whole Russian empire. The Russian proletariat formed workers' councils—soviets—across the whole country. By February Trotsky had rushed back from exile.

In Petersburg his magnificent oratory powers, allied to his clear revolutionary vision, meant that he rapidly became a prominent figure in the city Soviet. This was despite, or perhaps partly because of, the fact that he was not a member of either the Menshevik or the Bolshevik factions of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Rapidly he became the chairman of the Soviet, the inspirer and drafter of its manifestos, taking the lead in organising the mighty general strike that paralysed Russia and forced concessions from the tottering Tsarist government.

...

Trotsky understood the nature and potential of the soviet, a spontaneous creation of the revolutionary proletariat that no "thinker", aloof from the class struggle, could have invented. His receptivity to its potential as the basis of a workers' government was greater than that of the Bolsheviks. But characteristically in this period of his life he underestimated the role of the party within the Soviet, fighting for leadership of it. It was the Bolshevik-led Moscow Soviet that took the struggle to its highest point, that of insurrection.

The Petersburg Soviet on the other hand was arrested en masse after the peak of the strike movement was over. Trotsky was left to deliver a fine speech of defence of the Petersburg Soviet—through the windows of the courtroom—to the entire Russian proletariat. Here he defended the right to insurrection that the soviet was able to carry out eleven years later.

The revolution of 1905 brought the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks together again into a re-united RSDLP. Consequently it enhanced the role of Trotsky the prophet of unity, of conciliation. But the defeat of the revolution and the dark years of reaction split the party once again and drove Trotsky into isolation.

...

In exile again, in Vienna he produced a "non-factional" newspaper, *Pravda*. When Lenin organised the Bolsheviks into an independent party, rather than a faction, in 1912 Trotsky was his most bitter opponent. They exchanged not a few sharp and scornful polemics, which Trotsky's enemies were able to quote out of context in later years to great effect. When Lenin had been deified these sallies by Trotsky appeared the most shocking sacrilege. Lenin's characterisations of Trotsky seemed a damnation against which there was no appeal.

During the war Trotsky was a pillar of the Internationalist Movement, drafter of the Zimmerwald Manifesto, editor of anti-war papers in Paris (*Nashe Slovo*—Our Word) and in New York (*Novy Mir*—New

Fifty years ago Stalin's assassin brought an end to the life of a man who was, at one and the same time, the only survivor of the era of classical Marxism and one of the two great revolutionary leaders over the twentieth century. Leon Davidovich Trotsky (1879-1940) united in his life's work, the unbreakable unity of revolutionary theory and practice.

Revolutionary Fighter

World). But these years did not heal his breach with Lenin. Lenin saw revolutionary defeatism, defeat of one's own country, as the lesser evil, as the litmus test for a consistent anti-war position. Trotsky refused to adopt this position. Whilst he split decisively with

from this position—which in later terminology we would call left-centrist. Lenin was then willing to wholeheartedly welcome Trotsky into the Bolshevik Party and to defend him against the petty jealousies of some of the "Old Bolsheviks". Trotsky rallied to

Lunacharsky, himself recognized as the Bolsheviks' greatest public speaker in 1917, was an expert witness:

"I regard Trotsky as probably the greatest orator of our age . . . His impressive appearance, his handsome sweeping gestures, the pow-

Seventy years later in the era of the soundbite, when the atomising electronic media have reduced our attention span, such a scene seems frankly incredible. That uneducated, indeed illiterate, masses should listen, understand and act on the basis of such agitation and propaganda is a reminder of what a revolution does to the oppressed masses.

But Trotsky's most important role in the Revolution was as the leader of the insurrection.

One year later, a witness to his work generously wrote:

"All the work of practical organisation of the insurrection was conducted under the immediate leadership of the chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, Trotsky. It is possible to declare with certainty that the swift passing of the garrison to the side of the Soviet and the bold execution of the work of the Military Revolutionary Committee the party owes principally and above all to comrade Trotsky."

The witness was Joseph Stalin.

From the summer of 1918 imperialists sent their armies against the revolution, plunging the country into a three

year civil war. The old Tsarist army had been destroyed: a new army was needed to defend the workers' state. Trotsky, a man with no military experience, was chosen to create it.

The Red Army astounded the world not only by the rapidity with which it was formed, but also by the courage and audacity with which it fought. Trotsky proved himself a brilliant strategist. He led from the front, criss-crossing the country in an armoured train which served as a military headquarters and as a propaganda base, with its own printing press. The defeat of the imperialist invaders owed much to Trotsky, "the organiser of victory" as one of his contemporaries called him.

Trotsky showed his mettle in the darkest and most dangerous situations. Victor Serge recalls his arrival in Petrograd when all seemed lost, when even Lenin thought it was necessary to evacuate the city. Yudenich and the White Guards were at the very gates of the proletarian capital. Then Trotsky and his staff took control of affairs. Serge writes:

"They took everything in hand, meticulously and pas-



Trotsky aged 57, 'mug-shot' taken by the police when he was granted asylum in Mexico.

the social chauvinists he maintained a bloc with Martov's "Menshevik Internationalists". These in contrast refused to break absolutely with the patriotic Mensheviks. Thus Lenin, with some justice if with occasional polemical exaggeration, stigmatised Trotsky as refusing to break with the centre, internationally associated with Karl Kautsky. It was only the Russian Revolution itself that broke Trotsky definitively

Bolshevism in its darkest hours, during the repression that followed the July Days. His declaration landed him in jail.

As in 1905, Trotsky played a leading role in mobilising the working class and poor peasantry. In an age before the invention of microphones, he would often speak for two or three hours to a crowd several thousands strong.

...

erful rhythm of his speech, his loud but never fatiguing voice, the remarkable coherence and literary skill of his phrasing, the richness of imagery, scalding irony, his soaring pathos, his rigid logic, clear as polished steel—those are Trotsky's virtues as a speaker . . . I have seen Trotsky speaking for two and a half to three hours in front of a totally silent, standing audience listening as though spellbound to his monumental political treatise."

...and strategis

TROTSKY WAS not only a front rank participant in the 1905 Russian Revolution, he was also its analyst. He perceived in the decaying Tsarist autocracy, with its foreign dominated capitalist industry, the impotence of the bourgeoisie and the tremendous potential of the proletariat to seize power. This was the basis for the theory of permanent revolution. This stated:

"In accordance with its immediate tasks the Russian Revolution is a bourgeois revolution. But the Russian bourgeoisie is anti-revolutionary. The victory of the revolution is therefore possible only as a result of the victory of the proletariat. But the victorious proletariat will not stop at the programme of bourgeois democracy; it will go on to the programme of socialism. The Russian Revolution will become the first stage of the socialist world revolution."

Lenin could agree with Trotsky on the need for the proletariat to seize power. This perspective united both men as against the Mensheviks. Their view was that the bourgeois character of the revolution required this class to come to power and develop a capitalist economy. Thus the proletariat was obliged to play the role of urger-on, supporter and loyal opposition to the Liberal bourgeoisie in their schema.

Lenin and Trotsky both operated with a revolutionary perspective. But for Lenin the necessity of the proletariat to

ally itself with the peasantry dictated that it share power with this class and limit its programme to the fullest, most revolutionary enactment of the democratic programme: universal suffrage, armed peoples' militia, elected judiciary, expropriation of the feudal landowners etc. This regime Lenin named the "Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry".

Trotsky certainly understood the need for an alliance with the peasantry but insisted that the proletariat would be the dominant, leading force in such an alliance. As such it could not commit itself to preserving capitalism.

If it did so it would rapidly be obliged to defend the capitalists against the spontaneous struggles of the workers.

History proved Trotsky right in 1917. Lenin abandoned his former perspective. Unfortunately for later developments neither man clarified the question theoretically in the years 1917-1923. It is incorrect to claim that Lenin secretly adopted Trotsky's position. He probably remained cautious about the general applicability of Trotsky's theory.

However, the factional struggle that broke out in 1923 re-raised the issue of permanent revolution in two vital respects. One related to the old disputes of 1905, the other a new issue. The new question posed by Nikolai Bukharin and Joseph Stalin was whether or not socialism could be built in a single, isolated country. Before 1923 the answer of

sionately. It was magical. Trotsky kept saying, 'It is impossible for a little army of 15,000 ex-officers to master a working class capital of 700,000 inhabitants'.

With the death of Lenin the years of victory came to an end. Yet, as Trotsky later realised, the next seventeen years witnessed the most indispensable struggle of his life. In the remaining years of the 1920s Trotsky rallied two oppositional factions to fight the bureaucratic degeneration. The United Opposition of 1926 grouped thousands of old Bolsheviks and Young Communists around a revolutionary programme.

They fought for restoration of the democracy of the soviets, the unions and the party, and an end to the concessions to the Kulaks associated with Bukharin's "socialism at a snail's pace". Above all they waged a merciless campaign against the Menshevik policies of the Communist International.

●●●

The Opposition was defeated, expelled and exiled just in time for Stalin. The crisis the Opposition predicted forced an adventurist "left turn". Stalin took certain fea-

tures of the Left Opposition's programme but robbed them of all anti-bureaucratic content. A sharp turn to industrialisation created a bureaucratically centralised command plan, at enormous cost in terms of human suffering. The "left" Third Period, with its wild adventurist refusal of the workers' united front, allowed Hitler to come to power in Germany.

Expelled from the USSR Trotsky could only ring the tocsin of warning to the world's largest Communist Party outside of the Soviet Union. Form a united front with the Social Democrats, unite the mass armed workers' militias—the Reichsbanner and the Red Front Fighters—and Hitler's SA could be halted in its tracks. Trotsky's warnings fell on the deaf ears of a brutal and self-satisfied bureaucracy.

Trotsky set about the most important task of his life, the one that centrists from Isaac Deutscher to Tony Cliff have always deprecated, always seen as "tragic" or even unworthy of his greatness. Not so. This struggle, the struggle for the Fourth International, showed Trotsky's full political and moral greatness.

The last five years of Trotsky's life were ones of an

unbelievable series of defeats for the proletarian vanguard—in Austria, Spain and France.

They were, in the Soviet Union, the years that Victor Serge dubbed "The midnight of the century". At least 10,000 Left Oppositionists were assassinated, lost amongst the hundreds of thousands, even millions of Stalin's victims. They went to their deaths singing the Internationale, defiantly espousing the cause of Lenin and Trotsky.

●●●

Trotsky himself lost both of his sons, Sergei in Russia and Leon Sedov in Paris to a GPU assassin. His closest collaborators and allies in building the Fourth International were also among the victims, Rudolf Klement, the secretary of the Fourth International was assassinated shortly before the founding Congress.

Any lesser figure than Trotsky would have collapsed under the pitiless pressure of these years, above all under the unbearable degree of isolation from the world's labour movement that Stalinist persecution imposed. This was symbolised in bricks and mortar in the little fortress at Coyoacan in Mexico which was

Trotsky's last refuge and prison.

Trotsky himself summed up the roots of his steadfastness and optimism in the darkest hours. It was in his experience of struggle both in the years of revolutionary flood tide and the years of ebb, when the masses "tired of the tension, became disillusioned, lost faith in themselves".

Trotsky speaking for all the Bolshevik-Leninists said:

"They learned not to fall into despair over the fact that the laws of history do not depend upon their individual tastes and are not subordinated to their own moral criteria. They learned to subordinate their individual tastes to the laws of history.

They learned not to become frightened by the most powerful enemies if their power is in contradiction to the needs of historical development. They know how to swim against the stream in the deep conviction that the next historic flood will carry them to the other shore.

Not all will reach that shore, many will drown. But to participate in the movement with open eyes and with an intense will—only this can give the highest moral satisfaction to a thinking being!"

accumulated horrors of the purges convinced these shallow pragmatists that the USSR had departed so far from the norm of a workers' state that it must be some sort of new class formation.

Degeneration

Trotsky, however, could see that despite the monstrous political degeneration that Stalin's totalitarian regime represented, this was not an expression of the post-capitalist planned economy. Rather it was a regression from, and in contradiction to, the gains of October.

Either the proletariat will destroy the bureaucratic dictatorship bringing the political regime into conformity with its economic base or the bureaucracy and world imperialism will overthrow the planned property relations resolving the contradiction.

In any case, he asserted, the phenomenon of Stalinism was not a historically necessary and long-lived phenomenon. History and recent events have proved Trotsky correct.

In the last year or so of his life as the onrush of gigantic, catastrophic events unhinged and disorientated most would-be revolutionaries, including many of his own co-thinkers Trotsky fought a battle to impart this method to future generations of Marxists.

He realised that it was not sufficient to receive Marxist doctrine as a fixed and finished accumulation of dogma. It was necessary to master the method needed to re-evaluate, to rediscover, to reject,

if necessary, the conclusions inherited from the past and to make new analyses, new conquests. Only by such means does Marxism indicate its fruitfulness, its ability to truly guide the revolutionary proletariat in all the tasks that lie ahead of it.

DEFENDING TROTSKY

... From 'Trotskyists'

THE HALF-CENTENARY of Trotsky's assassination was not marked in the USSR by any admission of Stalin's responsibility for his murder or by any step towards rehabilitating the co-founder of the Soviet Union.

On the contrary, Gorbachev's ideologists have been smearing Trotsky with new lies, duly retailed here by the Workers' Party to which *Class Struggle* was the only journal on the Irish Left to reply in defence of Trotsky. Sadly it is necessary, now, to defend him from self-styled Trotskyists in who, in "commemorating" him, actually attack what he regarded as his own life's most important work.

In the August issue of *Socialist Worker*, Kieran Allen, launches two attacks on Trotsky. The first is surprisingly crude even for believers in Tony Cliff's vulgar Marxism. Recalling how Trotsky concluded in the '30s that a political revolution was needed in the USSR, he comments:

This view, however, remained in contradiction to his idea that Russia was still a "degenerated workers state" (no. 69, p. 7)

This "idea" of Trotsky's was the key-stone of his whole political struggle, right up to his death in 1940. There was and is no contradiction in, on the one hand regarding the USSR as a degenerated workers' state and and, on the other, arguing for a revolution by soviet workers against that state.

A workers' political revolution in the USSR would have to smash the state in Engels' meaning of the state as the "special armed bodies" which maintain the rule of the oppressor over the masses. That state, however, rests upon a social organisation in which the bourgeoisie no longer exists, productive property is nationalised and a bureaucratic plan—rather than the maximisation of profit—determines the allocation of resources to the major industries. Marx held that the class character of any state is given not by which social groups exercise direct political control but by the forms of property which it is based on and defends. The USSR remains a workers' state (despite the political counter-revolution by Stalin) because its new forms of property are essential to the future socialist mode of production and are antagonistic to capitalism. Historically these forms of property were impossible without the abolition of the bourgeoisie by the Russian workers' revolution.

Political revolution by Soviet workers to smash the armed power of the bureaucracy is not in contradiction to preserving the post-capitalist features of the economy. Rather, it is necessary for workers to impose their direct democratic political control in order to save the post-capitalist property from collapsing back into capitalism, and under workers' control to re-open the road to socialism. These are the positions defended by the only consistent revolutionary communists of the 1930s—the Trotskyists. *Socialist Worker's* second attack on Trotsky in the same article sums up the roots of SWM's anti-Trotskyism in a nutshell:

In the midst of the deepest period of reaction he set out to form the Fourth International. The groups which composed it were, however, riven with sectarianism. Nevertheless its achievement was to keep alive a tradition of revolutionary socialism.

This is actually a lie. It was only after the collapse of the FI, after 10 years of struggle, that it split into factions and sects among whom the SWM's parent body was one of the originals.

Yet, these remarks refer to the programmatic struggles which Trotsky regarded as a more important task than his own role even in the Russian Revolution! Why? Because, what was at stake was to create a leadership, in the fight for a new revolutionary programme, capable of drawing the lessons of the Russian revolution and its degeneration, and of raising the banner of revolutionary communism not only for that "midnight in the century" but for the proletarian struggles of the future.

Allen thinks it generous to admit that

Nevertheless its achievement [the Fourth International] was to keep alive a tradition of revolutionary socialism.

Coming from an organisation which holds that it was a delusion and a mistake to set up the Fourth International, and which fundamentally rejects the FI's programmatic method, Allen is merely thanking the Trotskyists of the '30s and '40s for updating the literary tradition of communism on a number of issues such as fascism, popular fronts etc. But this rich literary tradition would not have existed except as the product of the struggle to launch the Fourth International.

The SWM's tradition is certainly not that of this century's greatest revolutionary communist who wrote in 1935:

How the new International will take form, through what stages it will pass, what final shape it will assume—this no-one can foretell today. And indeed there is no need to do so: historical events will show us. But it is necessary to begin by proclaiming a programme that meets the tasks of our epoch. On the basis of this programme it is necessary to mobilise co-thinkers, the pioneers of the new International. No other road is possible.

SWM rejects the understanding of the Marxist party, and especially the world party, as most essentially a programme for revolution around which to win militants. It condemns Trotsky's formation of an international because its small forces limited it to being a propaganda organisation. SWM prefers to postpone the international political tasks until large parties have already grown up on the national terrain of different countries. In this the SWM adapts to the tradition not of communism but of the degenerate Second International. Groups who reject Trotsky's most important legacy out of hand in this way sacrifice all claim to "stand in the tradition" of, the only consistent fighter—and not merely writer—against Stalinism.

Bolshevism was a unanimous no. Stalin, Bukharin, Lenin and Trotsky all held that the task of building socialism could only be begun in backward Russia. Stalin and Bukharin's volte-face created a theoretical banner around which the growing bureaucracy, satisfied with the privileges and power

it had accumulated due to the very isolation and backwardness of Russia, could rally. They sought to dislocate the USSR from the world revolution.

Here the new theory—socialism in one country—linked up to the old disputes over permanent revolution. Under the guise of returning to Lenin's stages theory (first democratic dictatorship and then socialist dictatorship) they actually adopted the old Menshevik view (first a bourgeois democratic revolution and later a proletarian one).

Permanent Revolution

The disastrous nature of this theory and perspective was demonstrated in China in 1926-28 and thereafter in a long series of betrayed and aborted revolutions. Trotsky took up the struggle against both aspects of the theory. The theory of permanent revolution was re-formulated and clarified. Its bedrock assertions were that for countries with a belated bourgeois development:

"The complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all its peasant masses." (Emphasis in original)

With regard to the peasantry Trotsky asserted:

"No matter how great the revolutionary role of the peasantry may be, it nevertheless cannot be an independent role, still less a leading one."

Since the proletariat alone can lead the oppressed and exploited masses to the seizure and exercise of power it must then, precisely to fulfill the tasks of the democratic revolution, make "deep inroads into the rights of bourgeois property".

In Trotsky's words:

"The democratic revolution grows over directly into the socialist revolution and thereby becomes a permanent revolution."

However, a "socialist society is not feasible within national boundaries". The revolution, to be successful, must continue to unfold in a permanent manner, uninterrupted by rigid stages:

"The socialist revolution begins on the national arena, it unfolds on the international arena and is completed on the world arena."

Trotsky's theory has been tested positively and negatively countless times this century. Each time its validity has been proven. Permanent revolution is also the bedrock of Trotsky's other major theoretical developments. The negative proof of Trotsky's theory—the isolation of the Russian Revolution, the failure of the reactionary-utopian project of building socialism in one country laid the basis for his analysis of the degeneration of the USSR.

From 1923 to 1940 Trotsky analysed and re-analysed the growth of a monstrous bureaucratic caste parasitically feeding on the gains of October. He observed and fought its political expropriation of the proletariat, its creation of a Bonapartist police dictatorship, its crystallisation into a sealed off, isolated caste.

He developed a programme of political revolution for destroying this monstrous totalitarian regime, for restoring soviet power and a planned economy directed by the producers themselves.

The theory of permanent revolution lies at the root of Trotsky's other great conquest, the development of a programme of transitional demands that link the "final goal" of socialism to the workers' struggles within capitalist society and against it. In Results and Prospects Trotsky prophetically observed:

"The very fact of the proletariat's representatives entering the government, not as powerless hostages but as the leading force, destroys the borderline between maximum and minimum programme."

Trotsky was to develop this insight, drawing on the experience of Bolshevism and the mass parties of the Communist International. He arrived at the conception of transitional demands that challenge capitalism here and now.

They can mobilise the workers' forces to combat capitalism and overthrow it. They create the basis for transcending capitalist society. Central to this programme were the demands related to workers' control of production and distribution—which would create a school for a socialist planned economy.

Underlying all of Trotsky's theoretical conquests was a deep, ingrained mastery of the dialectical method. With this he was able to transcend the fixed, exclusive, wooden categories of formal thinking—backward or advanced countries, bourgeois or proletarian revolution, workers' state or capitalist state, immediate demands or socialist demands. He did not confuse these necessary categories or norms but he understood how they interacted, combined and were transformed from one into another.

This showed its importance in Trotsky's last struggle against Max Shachtman and James Burnham in the Socialist Workers Party of the USA. The Hitler-Stalin Pact and the

Saddam's Iraq

Before the first world war Iraq existed as three provinces of the Turkish Ottoman empire. After the war the British and French replaced the Turks and carved up the provinces of the Arabian Peninsula.

Britain retained military bases after conceding Iraq independence in 1932 the imperialist Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) controlled the oil industry and the monarchy was controlled by Whitehall. This provoked resistance from the Iraqi masses, including the powerful new labour movement. Strikes against the appalling economic conditions were paralleled by the growth of Pan-Arabist nationalism which sought to promote the political unity of all Arab peoples in one nation.

Ba'athism

In Iraq a specific form of this, Ba'athism, was founded in 1954, an early recruit being Saddam Hussein. Ba'athism originated in the 1940s in Syria, based on the writings of Michel Aflaq. It was fiercely nationalist and Pan-Arabist, but its claimed socialist character was a fiction. It denounced Marxism and internationalism and espoused class harmony under the auspices of the Arab nation. Saddam Hussein held that the worker's "class is secondary to his role as a citizen"

As the role of the citizen is defined by his role in the struggle as a son of the people, the people will therefore define his rights and duties. As the socialist state is the state of the people, there can be no class conflict. It goes without saying that the relationship between the working class and the Ba'ath is equally harmonious, since the Ba'ath is the party of the toiling masses.

When the Ba'ath achieved power in Iraq in 1963 in a short-lived coalition, the Ba'ath military wing, the National Guard, launched brutal pogroms against communists and workers. Thousands were slain.

When the Ba'ath achieved power in Iraq in 1963 the Ba'ath military wing, the National Guard, launched brutal pogroms against communists and workers. Thousands were slain.

A coup in 1968 by the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party (ABSP) was more successful and Ba'athism has remained in power ever since. Hussein was

a key figure in the ruling Revolutionary Command Council and in charge of Party Intelligence, the secret police. Hussein had learnt from their earlier failure to entrench a Ba'athist regime and in 1968 combined promises of reform with repression of communists and of the Kurdish people. In 1970 the Kurds were offered limited autonomy. In 1972 the entire oil industry was nationalised. Trade with the Soviet



Turkish refugee camp: An Iraqi Kurd tells of his escape from Saddam's chemical war.

Union meant halting the persecution of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) which in 1973 joined the Ba'athists in a coalition government! The durability of Hussein's regime is proof of the success of these concessions, but there were two factors that enabled it to work—oil, and the treachery of the ICP.

After nationalisation of oil Iraq enjoyed an economic boom which stabilised the rule of the Ba'athists. After 1973 the price rises in oil brought undreamt of wealth. Production soared from 8.4m. tonnes in 1951 to 170.6 m. in 1979, earning \$21.2 billion.

"Ba'athisation" of society forced people to join the party or face prison. The unions and other institutions were made subservient to the ideology and the Party of Ba'athism—even in Kurdistan, despite its formal limited autonomy. Saddam allied with the Shah of Iran to quell the resulting unrest, killing thousands of Kurds, resettling them and trampling on all the "rights" granted in 1970.

Torturers

Despite all of this the working class of Iraq did not rise against Ba'athism. They allowed Saddam to build up a repressive apparatus of everything from street informers and block wardens right up to professional torturers and assassins.

For this the Stalinist ICP must take the blame. The ICP sat alongside the Ba'athists in government from 1973 to 1978, providing the regime with left cover and credibility within the working class. They justified this by referring to Ba'athism's supposed nationalism and anti-imperialism.

The real reason, however,

was that the USSR had found in Iraq a temporary ally in the Middle East and insisted that the ICP, in the time honoured fashion of Stalinism, subordinate the interests of the working class to the foreign policy needs of the Kremlin. The price paid for this treachery was that the ICP became the first victims of Saddam's change of policy when Iraq, needing to use its oil wealth to improve and develop its in-

dustries, turned towards the imperialist west. It had been only a matter of time before the needs of Iraqi capitalism asserted themselves. Saddam delivered a death blow to the ICP, executing its leaders and smashing its organisation in 1978.

For all the anti-imperialist rhetoric of Ba'athism, Saddam's party is in no sense a

petit bourgeois nationalist organisation. It is a thoroughly bourgeois formation, tied by a thousand links to capitalism and imperialism. Ba'athism sponsored the development of Iraqi capitalism on the basis of its oil revenues by bringing into being a whole layer of contractors, industrialists and middlemen. These people grew fabulously rich by plundering the country's oil revenues.

Nor has Saddam made any serious moves to break Iraq's semi-colonial dependence on imperialism. Even during the period of the friendship treaty with the USSR the Ba'athists attempted to attract imperialist investment. Contracts multiplied six-fold from 1975 to 1981. Britain, the USA and, especially France, became more and more dominant in the Iraqi economy.

Saddam's long war with Iran began as an attempt to ingratiate himself with imperialism. Fearful of the instability caused by the Iranian Revolution and eager to show himself to be a pro-imperialist strongman in the region, he launched the invasion in 1980 to restore pro-Shah politicians to power in Teheran.

Despite all the oil money, and the years of boom, more than one third of a population of 14 million live in mud huts or tents with no sanitation or amenities.

The war was also Saddam's attempt to stabilise his rule by uniting the "Arab nation" against Persians. In the course of the war he secured vast arms deals with France, Italy, the USA and Britain, and finally the US navy intervened on behalf of Iraq.

By welcoming the imperialists in this way Saddam has ensured that Iraq has retained all the features of a semi-colony. Not only is it now burdened by a foreign debt that rose from \$2.5 billion in 1980 to \$80 billion by 1987, its attempts to diversify its industrial base have failed. Virtually all industry is still oil related. It is obliged to import most of its food.

The consequences of all this for the masses are dire. Despite all the oil money, despite the grand plans and the years of boom, especially in the construction industry, more than one third of a population of 14 million live in mud huts or tents with no sanitation or

amenities. In order to maintain his rule, Saddam has been obliged to transform the rule of the Ba'athist party into the rule of a single dictator, himself.

To hold together a small capitalist class and preserve it from the wrath of the dispossessed, repression had to be carried into the party itself. After dealing with the ICP Saddam launched a massive purge within the ABSP in 1979. All those outside of his own clique were slaughtered. He placed himself at the head of the army and all the main state institutions amid a cult of the personality rivalling that of Stalin.

Failure

Saddam's failure in the war with Iran left him after 1988 in chronic economic crisis. Foreign reserves collapsed from \$35 billion to \$2 billion, and debts soared. The immediate answer was more brutality. The chemical weapons that Britain had enabled him to build were used against the Kurds, killing thousands and destroying their land. The death penalty was introduced for anyone found guilty of publicly insulting Saddam. Saddam's move into Kuwait is a desperate gamble to win back lost support through a military victory and by donning the mantle of Pan-Arabism.

To rid themselves of the Ba'athist dictatorship the working class need to be won away from all brands of Arab nationalism and Stalinism. They need to strike out on an independent course. Iraqi revolutionaries can help the masses find such a course only if they embrace the programme of Trotskyism as the basis for a new revolutionary party.■

Whose Kuwait?

THE TERRITORY of Kuwait did not exist until a British High Commissioner in 1922 drew a line on the map around Kuwait city, a pearl-diving and trading centre within the Ottoman empire, dominated by the al-Sabah family since 1752.

This coastal settlement had links with the oases and nomadic bedouins in the area but the population was never coherent, settled nor distinct enough from the rest of the Eastern Arabian peninsula to describe as a nation.

After the First World War the British and the French arbitrarily defined borders and created states as spheres of influence, for markets, trade routes and military bases. The discovery of oil in the 1930s strengthened imperialist domination.

Only in 1961 did Britain make Kuwait a formally independent state, sovereign in its security and foreign relations. In the same year Iraq first attempted to claim the area, threatening military force and trying to block Kuwait's entry into the United Nations and the Arab League. Britain faced down this threat in

1963, with Kuwait paying \$3 million to Iraq for the latter's recognition. The territory was not disputed again until this year.

Despite thirty years of independent statehood, Kuwait has still no claim to be a separate nation. Kuwaitis speak Arabic, along with 100 million others in the Gulf and North Africa. They are an amalgam of many nomadic or other Gulf tribal cultures.

Until recently Gulf cultures were interchangeable and mixed. Moreover, nations unify different class forces in the society. Classes, antagonistic at one level, are bound together by a common history and culture. But in Kuwait it is hard to find a Kuwaiti working class.

Its population is two million. But only 650,000 are Kuwaiti and over 80% of the workers are non-Kuwaiti. In private industry (mainly oil) this reaches 98%. There are about 300,000 Palestinians, and up to 500,000 workers from South and South East Asia, including 150,000 maids to service the wealthy Kuwaiti families.

So when Iraq invaded Kuwait there were no national rights as such that were being attacked, however wrong the invasion was. That is why it would not be permissible to fight with the Kuwaiti army and ruling clique to defend "the fatherland" and its borders.

But Iraq itself has no justified claim to any territory in Kuwait, any more than Saudi Arabia would have. All of these states were falsely created. None of them had pre-existing boundaries.

Although Kuwait is not a unified and distinct nation, the people who live and work there should be the ones to decide its future—not Saddam Hussein. All the people living in the area of Kuwait must decide to which state they will belong.

The Kuwait which existed before Saddam's invasion was not a democracy within which the population could determine their own future. The ruling al-Sabah family now numbers about 1,000 and heads a layer of about 60,000 men who are eligible to vote and who control the bulk of the economy. The

ruling family's power derives from British control as powerful local agents supporting their colonial rule, and later ensuring the interests of the imperialists after 'independence'.

Kuwaiti citizenship, first class, was restricted to males over 21 who could prove that their families had roots in pre-1921 Kuwait.

So, less than 3% of the resident population were eligible to vote in the last elections! A proposal to grant equal suffrage to women Kuwaiti citizens was defeated in 1982.

These women, like male Kuwaiti second class citizens, also have limited property and legal rights. Kuwait's migrant workers have no rights at all—the extensive free state health service and education system are not available to non-Kuwaitis.

The imperialists who now claim to defend Kuwait's 'democratic and national rights' do so cynically for the same exploitative reasons as they supported these hideous inequalities and lack of democracy.■

The capitalist re-unification of Germany on October 3rd was brought forward by two months due to the state of near total collapse of the GDR's economy, induced by the 2 July restoration of the capitalist market.

Currency union on July 2nd, and abolishing the state monopoly of foreign trade, led to a flood of western goods filling the shops, causing a collapse in demand for home produce. The hopes of the Bonn regime that capital would pour into the East have been dashed by political uncertainties and discovery of the chronic backwardness of production in an economy where cut-throat capitalist competition had not been the driving force for over 40 years.

Having already suffered price rises of around 500%, every worker in the GDR faces the threat of immediate redundancy. West German Finance Ministry officials believe only one in five enterprises may survive. Even efficient and previously stable ones like Narva, which manufactures perfectly good lightbulbs, face bankruptcy through lack of suppliers and finance.

Unemployment on a previously unimaginable scale underlines just how serious a defeat it was for the working class to allow capitalism back to East Germany. *Newsweek* magazine quotes a leaked memo from the GDR's Interior Ministry, estimating 60% unemployment by the end of the year! Little wonder that both seasoned Bonn officials and fledgling bourgeois politicians in Berlin are petrified at the prospect. Plans are already afoot to police the enormous protests that this will undoubtedly provoke, and some speak of the need to use the army should things get out of control.

In particular agricultural workers are seeing their entire livelihood undermined. The abrupt ending of the state monopoly of foreign trade has

EAST GERMANY

Crash course in capitalism

left the state collective farms (known as LPG's) vulnerable. Huge supermarket chains have secured deals with shops in the GDR guaranteeing rights as sole suppliers of agricultural produce. Those who thought that the wastefulness of bureaucratic planning would be replaced by an inherently rational market system have been disappointed. There is no such thing. Huge stockpiles of milk and perishable goods, together with acres of arable produce lying unharvested in the fields, exist alongside rocketing food prices.

Tragic Mistake

The GDR workers are receiving their first lesson in capitalist values: capitalism worships at the altar of profit not need. Unable to distribute their produce, the LPG's face complete collapse while their workers contemplate destitution. Little wonder that in early August over 50,000 agricultural workers from across the GDR descended on Berlin in an unprecedented demonstration of their anger and disillusionment. As one of the speakers told a crowd in Berlin's Alexanderplatz: "We voted for rapid unification and for the social market system. We trusted the government to find a way. Now we see it was a tragic mistake."

In general the working class, after forty years of Stalinist terror and mismanagement, nevertheless support reunification and a return to the market.

But more and more sections are discovering the meaning of capitalism the hard way. And it is not just the market

that has lost its shine. Illusions in western-style parliamentarism—so prominent during the March elections—are being dented as the antics of the main political parties and the powerlessness of the government are displayed for all to see.

The horse-trading and manoeuvring of the CDU and SPD over the date of the elections and the route to unity has rightly appalled many in the GDR. But the economic crisis and the Volkskammer's cap-in-hand approach to West Germany has revealed to many that parliament is only a talking shop, completely powerless in the face of the real decision makers, such as the West German capitalist boss of Hertz who is taking the life and death decisions concerning the fate of thousands of GDR enterprises without reference to the GDR government.

The SPD (German Social-Democratic Party) are caught in a trap of their own making.

Their aim is to build in the east a bourgeois party of the working class such as the SPD has in the west. But to win working class support, the SPD has to appear to oppose the worst privations of the restoration. That is why their ministers played-up their abandonment of the GDR coalition government, protesting that the reunification treaty would leave the people of the east as "second class citizens". At the same time, however, the SPD aims to prevent workers fighting back. The party doesn't want to be seen to delay unity, an image that cost them dear in the GDR's elections this March.

Already support for the 'Party of Democratic Socialism'—the old Stalinist party re-formed on a social democratic programme and rhetorical defence of the GDR's social gains—has begun to grow among agricultural workers on the LPGs. It remains to be seen whether the reformist leader of the PDS—Gregor Gysi—will succeed in turning

the PDS into another stable bourgeois-workers' party like the SPD, or whether the ranks of the party will disrupt his project by pressing for militant struggle against capitalism.

Above all, what is needed is the organisation of a new party of the German working-class, capable of utilising the current intense crisis to direct action against the economic domination of the western capitalists and the Bundesbank. Against all factory closures, such a party would call for and lead the occupation of threatened enterprises; against the threat of cheap labour it would demand full parity of wages with West German workers and a sliding scale of wages to protect them from inflation.

Party

In the particular conditions of today, the new party would demand an end to the looting of the GDR and to the chaos of

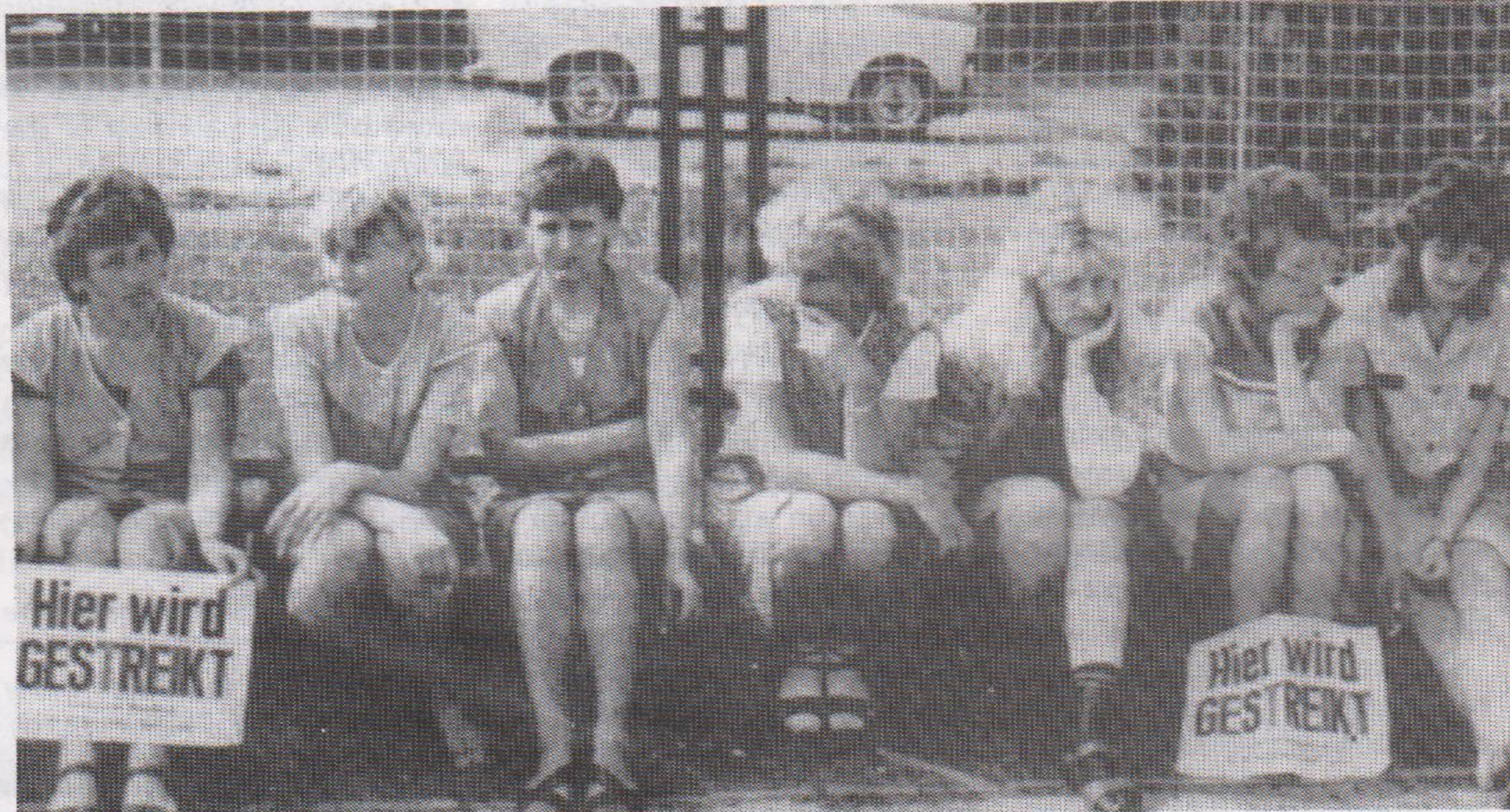
market distribution. It would call for the re-imposition of the state monopoly of foreign trade, not bureaucratically from above, but by the workers in the enterprises and LPG's seizing control of the farms, shops and transport systems. Workers in the GDR must organise direct distribution themselves. In order to avoid the absurd outcome of each plant, each farm competing with the other in the market, privatisation must be stopped dead in its tracks and a centralised plan re-established.

But instead of the corrupt and inefficient plan of the Stalinists, a centralised, democratic plan must be drawn up by elected and accountable councils of workers and farmers. Such direct workers' control would be a real alternative to the sham democracy of the Volkskammer and the Bundestag.

The German bourgeoisie realise just how serious the situation is. If the restoration of capitalism in the GDR involves massive upheaval it will be a bad advertisement for their system in the rest of Eastern Europe. It will strengthen the forces of bureaucratic inertia in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Poland. It will drive the workers of those countries to resist capitalist restoration. They will rightly feel that if Germany, with all its advantages, is staring chaos in the face, then their own prospects are bleak indeed.

The German workers must make it their great aim to display to their East European brothers and sister that there is an alternative to Stalinism and capitalism. This is workers' council power and democratic planning, and to win it a Trotskyist party is urgently required.

Without such a party the real threat exists of the growth of mass anti-communist, anti-capitalist, anti-western, but deeply nationalistic and chauvinistic sentiments and organisations. ■



Shedding jobs and illusions—workers on strike for unemployment pay.

OVER 500 black workers have died in the latest bout of fighting between ANC supporters and followers of the Inkatha movement. The lies of the racist media which portrayed the violence as tribal have now been fully exposed.

On Sept. 4th many witnessed the police bussing in more than 100 Inkatha warriors in red bandanas into single-sex hostels on the outskirts of Seborkeng. Armed with guns, automatic rifles, knives, spears and machetes, they left at least 36 dead among the hostel workers.

The apartheid regime itself is the real cause of the violence. Not only has it long fostered the divisions, but it has deliberately whipped up the current strife as a manoeuvre to strengthen its hand in the negotiations.

For many years the apartheid regime has sponsored leaders like Buthelezi whose "racial" categories and fake homelands were designed to encourage divisions between Zulu, Xhosa and other ethnic groups, divisions which were otherwise being eroded by the formation of a modern urban working class.

Inkatha: servant of apartheid

Wherever the apartheid regime could, it fostered strife, especially using segregation in townships and hostels. In particular, Zulu migrant workers would be housed in hostels set apart from the settled township communities.

The police turned a blind eye to Inkatha supporters arming themselves, and the resentment of the local communities was matched in turn by the resentment of the hostel dwellers at the relative privilege of those with residency rights.

Free to Organise

Inkatha was free to organise while others were in jail. Buthelezi was allowed to jet round the world opposing sanctions while Mandela and Sisulu languished on Robben Island.

Inkatha and the apartheid regime thus developed a mutually beneficial relationship whereby Pretoria was able to point to a black leader with a real mass base who opposed the ANC's armed struggle and sanctions campaign.

Inkatha supporters run the civil service and police in kwaZulu. In Natal it receives protection from both police and army. It has been responsible for the long-standing violence in the area.

Wherever working class organisations have sought to mobilise united, non-ethnic, independent opposition to apartheid, Inkatha has stood in the way.

In the townships, it backed up reactionary gangsters against community organisations loyal to the United Demo-

cratic Front/ANC. It sought everywhere to undermine workers' organisations.

Buthelezi's interests would lie in some sort of federal arrangement which would allow him complete power in Natal, or national power sharing on ethnic grounds. De Klerk needs to gather as many forces opposed to the ANC as possible to act as a counter pressure on the desire of ANC rank and file for radical change. He needs Inkatha to force the ANC's hand. That is why he defends Buthelezi's demand to participate in talks.

After the long and bitter struggle to defeat Inkatha, young UDF activists in Natal were dismayed to hear Mandela's first advice to them—"throw your weapons into the sea". If obeyed this would have

left the townships unprotected against the gangsters, Inkatha and the Natal/kwaZulu police. Activists throughout the country felt that they had not struggled this far to see Buthelezi sit down at the negotiating table.

The response of the ANC leadership reflects the differing pressures on them. On one hand they are committed to the negotiated settlement

. They are anxious for social peace during the negotiations process and are keen to prevent the mass movement disrupting it. But of course, the struggle against the reactionary Inkatha must be maintained.

Mass Base

On the other hand, they have to retain their mass base which is at present overwhelmingly committed to one person one vote in a unitary state, with no veto for any group, be it white or black.

So although Walter Sisulu announced that Mandela will not talk to Buthelezi, the leadership is preparing a senior team to start exploratory peace talks with Inkatha.

The ANC leaders have made it clear that they are paving the way for a compromise with De Klerk and a settlement which maintains exploitation and inequality.

Socialists should oppose the negotiations outright and demand instead the convening of a sovereign constituent assembly to decide the fate of the nation. Independent workers' committees and a militia are necessary not only to make that possible, but also to prosecute the class struggle and prepare to seize power from the capitalist class.

Defence squads under the control of community organisations are vital to prevent Inkatha, or other gangs, destroying township areas. But the demands of migrant workers themselves must be addressed: the right of residence, the immediate abolition of the homeland system, a house-building programme, and the seizure and nationalisation of the land.

Only by fighting to build working class unity can militants put to flight the reactionary Buthelezi, while also preventing the betrayal being prepared by the ANC. ■

(The Politics of James Connolly, by Kieran Allen, Pluto, 1990.)

Kieran Allen's new political biography of James Connolly states that its critical evaluation of Connolly is written from a "Marxist revolutionary socialist position" and against what he calls the dominant traditions of Connolly historiography in Ireland—the nationalist, the Stalinist and, more recently, the revisionist-inspired Marxism of the Workers' Party. Judged by the most recent example of the latter, Austen Morgan's *Connolly*, Allen's work, whatever its severe shortcomings is a vast improvement.

The strength of Allen's work is that it is based on an analysis of the influences upon Connolly as a Scottish Marxist within the Second International. Connolly sought, with differing degrees of success, says Allen, to escape 'the decaying traditions of the International', specifically to escape the effects of reformism into a healthier revolutionary socialist thought and practice. He is also able to show how, in trying to break from its mechanical economic determinism and stages theory of progress (by which colonial countries first had to establish a bourgeois capitalist regime before advancing to socialism) Connolly's radical solution of linking the social question of the workers with the struggle for national freedom rested upon a flawed grasp of Marxism.

Connolly's argument in *Erin's Hope* that an independent capitalist Ireland could not exist within a world already glutted by modern capitalist industry flowed from an essentially non-Marxist theory that capitalism is limited in its development by the extent of the market—the 'under-consumptionism' theory of capitalist crisis. This was widespread within the British Marxist movement of the time.

Similarly Allen outlines Connolly's argument in *Erin's Hope* and *Labour in Irish History* that the national struggle was at root a conflict between the supposed primitive communism of pre-Norman Ireland and the 'alien' system of feudal and then capitalist private property which conquered it. By abandoning the classical Marxist position on the national question, by re-defining national struggle as intrinsically bound up with the anti-capitalist struggle of the working masses, Connolly succeeded, the author points out, in bringing the national question to the forefront of socialist politics in a colony.

But, he points out, the price paid for such a radical innovation was that while it dismissed the Home Rule constitutional bourgeoisie, it left Connolly unable to develop a clear class analysis of the revolutionary republican tradition, who as 'real patriots', were within Connolly's analysis "destined" to champion the struggle for socialism by the working class. Connolly's historic failure to grasp the essence of modern Republicanism as a petit bourgeois nationalist movement (and thus defenders of private property) or to develop a principled tactical relation to it, can only be understood from this standpoint.

Readers of *Class Struggle* will no doubt find these arguments familiar. They are the key elements of the IWG's analysis published in our theoretical journal *Class Struggle* between 1984-87 and available since April as the IWG book *Connolly: a Marxist Analysis* (by Johnston et al.). Shamefully, the IWG

articles receive no acknowledgement whatever in Allen's text or in his detailed references and bibliography.

Moving to the Left?

Allen claims that Connolly first became a rebel within the *Second International* in his period in Edinburgh when, along with other members of the *Scottish Socialist Federation*, he abandoned his work in Keir Hardie's *Independent Labour Party*. Disgusted by its opportunism especially its desire for alliance with the Liberal Party and the Home Rule nationalists, he argues "Connolly moved sharply left ... he devoted himself to building an independent Marxist organisation".

Connolly went back to the SSF, which later rejoined the British SDF. The SSF and the SDF were deeply sectarian parties whose programme amounted to abstract preaching for the maximum goal of socialism, combined with a minimum programme of reforms. Connolly, like all the other SSF members who joined the ILP, did so because both organisations shared a common agreement around the programme of minimum demands and a belief in the ballot box. There was no attempt by the Marxists in the SSF, like Connolly, to relate the maximum programme of the SSF to the ILP's struggle for reforms or to the illusions that thousands of workers clearly had in the ILP.

This, after all, was the issue raised by Engels who criticised the SDF precisely on this point—the need to bridge the gap between the real movement (the reformist-led ILP) and the goal of communism. Engels' view on this had two basic premises. First it was vital for Marxists to cut positively with the desire of the mass of workers to form a distinct and separate class party of their own. Second it was necessary to do this "without giving up or hiding our own distinct position".

Connolly did not have this position of bridging the minimum-maximum divide, even though he, unlike many of the 'orthodox' SDF leaders, had a record of trade union struggle in the 1890s. It effectively meant Connolly opportunistically tailing the ILP, while simultaneously as an SSF member continuing with abstract socialist propaganda in sectarian distance from the living struggles for reforms. Allen is wrong, then, to claim that his break from the ILP was a move towards revolutionary politics or a break with reformism and the method of the 'minimum/maximum' programme.

Allen cites Connolly standing as a "socialist candidate" rather than as a Labour candidate, in the St. Giles ward in the municipal elections, as evidence of this radical shift. In fact Connolly stood on the

REVIEW: Recovering Connolly?

minimum programme of the SDF, the same as the programme of the ILP. The only difference was that the vast bulk of workers saw the practical achievement of the reforms as relevant to their lives while Connolly's abstract "socialism" viewed this as entirely secondary. Allen's quote, as evidence of Connolly's break from reformism merely underlines the barren sectarianism of the SDF tradition:

The return of a socialist candidate does not mean the immediate realisation of even the programme of palliatives before the electorate. Nay such programmes are in themselves a mere secondary consideration of little weight, indeed, apart from the spirit in which they will be interpreted. The election of a socialist to any public body is only valuable in so far as it is the return of a disturber of the political peace. (p.11)

Similarly in Ireland, within the ISRP, its minimum-maximum programme and its sectarianism especially towards trade union struggle underlined Connolly's inability to relate to movements within the working class. The emergence of the *Labour Electoral Association*, led by Dublin Trades Council reps and craft workers, who once looked to the Home Rule party, created an opportunity to relate positively to sections of the workers who, whatever their illusions, looked to the idea of a possible party of Labour.

The ISRP and Connolly had no means to relate to them, a movement which Connolly described as "the most important step taken by organised workers in Ireland". Allen states that "Connolly was clearly hoping for a broader labour organisation to which the ISRP could relate as the advance guard for 'socialist propaganda' (p.84). Only too true—but precisely because he had not broken from the minimum-maximum, because his abstract revolutionary socialism in words could not be applied in practice, lead the struggles for reforms in the direction of socialism, Connolly had only 'socialist propaganda' to offer while passively waiting, hoping that the LEA would grow. It inevitably collapsed leaving the ISRP even further isolated.

Allen regards as "grossly unfair" the criticism by Ransom and others (shared by the IWG) of Connolly's sectarianism. He goes on, "We have already seen that Connolly has begun to break from a conventional ILP position ... His assessment of the LEA was

now also correct ... In the meantime [until the next upsurge of class struggle in 1909 when the Irish Transport Union was formed!] the prospect of building a Marxist cadre around the isolated and tiny ISRP was the only one on offer". Even while recognising that the ISRP continued to participate in municipal elections, with sponsorship from a number of trade unions, including a craft union, Allen remains blind to the small openings that did exist, if Connolly had, like Engels and Eleanor Marx, really understood how to bridge the gap in the minimum-maximum programme.

When Connolly in his second period in Ireland, admittedly in difficult circumstances, tried to found the Labour Party, yet made no attempt in the context of the Home Rule crisis to define it politically around any kind of socialist programme, Allen has nothing to say. His belief that Connolly's political trajectory was categorically to the left from reformism and from the Second International rests even more on Connolly's innovation on the national question.

Connolly broke from the

analysis [of the Second International] that assigned a passive role to the working class of colonised countries. It was no longer a question of waiting upon the good offices of socialists in the metropolitan countries; nor even a matter of waiting to follow the path of development of the more industrially advanced nations, instead the working class of the colony was now presented as the only class capable of leading the strategy for national independence and they would do so by fighting for a workers' republic. (p.32)

There are a number of things wrong with this. First, as Allen acknowledges, Connolly's insights rested entirely on a non-Marxist method whose results would mean a capitulation in principle and in practice to republican nationalism. Secondly, and even more important, and not mentioned at all by Allen, is that the ISRP programme—the minimum-maximum—suddenly placed the national question alongside the maximum programme for socialism, that is, to be ritually and passively invoked in its ab-

stract propaganda for socialism in the vague and distant future, while the daily and electoral tasks round the struggle for minimum reforms took up the life of the ISRP.

Thus by removing the national question from the living struggles of the day—by not making it part of the democratic programme to be fought for under capitalism—Connolly lost the means of relating to many of the concrete issues arising from national oppression which affected the masses. For example, the poor peasant farmers not yet covered by many of the land schemes, are only one case in point. What activity did Connolly undertake? Marches and rallies around the '98 committee, the Diamond Jubilee, the Boer War etc., are cited by Allen as evidence of the militant significance of his new political strategy. These were essentially propaganda exercises, and valuable as such. The fact that they drew thousands onto the streets showed that the potential existed for real anti-imperialist campaigns of struggle which concretely would have sought to link capitalist exploitation with national oppression.

Programmatic Method

Allen reads Connolly through Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, though he and the SWM now accept that Connolly's theory differs in method and substance from Trotsky's scientific Marxist framework (see p.93). He fails, however, to recognise that the real significance of Trotsky's achievement was to break from the sterility of the minimum-maximum programme in the direction of transitional politics.

Connolly, on the other hand,

(The Politics of James Connolly, by Kieran Allen, Pluto, 1990.)

AT THE outset, Kieran Allen, in *The Politics of James Connolly*, states that "it behoves any new book on Connolly to situate itself in relation to the vast bulk of literature that has been written about him", yet nowhere in it is there the slightest reference to the most substantial critical Marxist analysis of Connolly previously published.

We refer to the series of eight articles in the journal *Class Struggle* (1984-87) which were re-published by the Irish Workers Group in April 1990 as the book *Connolly: A Marxist Analysis* (by A. Johnston et al.). Allen finds room, however, to refer to much more obscure and marginal writings on Connolly.

We believe the omission is deliberate and raises serious questions about the honesty of Allen's book and the ethics of its author, editors and publishers. When examined it is patently clear that Allen's book has made substantial use of our articles without acknowledgement as the source for its central critique of the theoretical basis of Connolly's republican socialism. The explanatory framework which he uses in this main theme of his book was originated by the IWG articles.

A reader of the two books, Allen's and Johnston et al., will be struck with the extraordinary similarity of the framework of

STATEMENT On Allen's

analysis. The reader more familiar with the literature on Connolly will moreover realise how new and original was that coherent critical approach to Connolly published first by the IWG. For illustration may we cite the comment of a politically hostile reviewer, in *The Leninist* (28 June 1990):

Both are worthwhile contributions to a critical understanding of Connolly, in particular the IWG publication, which is based on a series of incisive articles in the journal Class Struggle back in 1984; articles which Allen seems to have used in his appraisal (p. 7).

Allen and the SWM may claim that all of this is nonsense—that the work is the result of completely independent scholarship.

Even in the extraordinary event that he had not read the IWG's widely noted articles on Connolly (which would undermine his claims to any serious research), it is impossible to accept that he should have independently worked out the same original analysis of the roots of Connolly's socialist republicanism. In fact Allen confirms that his book was

undertaken in 1986, when seven of the eight IWG articles had already been published.

In the 'acknowledgement' to his book Allen states

This book is written within the general framework of the theory and perspectives of the SWM and it is from that organisation as a whole that I have drawn the ideas which have shaped this book. (p.viii)

Yet neither SWM nor anyone else in it published a single theoretical article remotely contributing to working out an analysis of Connolly. Ritual pieces on Connolly appeared intermittently in SWM's paper from 1971-86—all of a hagiographic uncritical nature. Nothing in the two articles by Allen himself in *Socialist Worker* nos. 20 and 25 as late as 1986 indicated any development of his analysis along the lines of his present book. Only a year after all the IWG articles were published did his trajectory begin to change. In his 1988 introduction to the Bookmarks reprint of Connolly's *Labour in Irish History* (LIH) we find for the first time a critical approach to Connolly's ideas in *Erin's Hope* and *LIH*—along the lines published by the IWG.

liquidated the democratic programme into the socialist by interdefining national and social oppression. Thus, what Allen describes as Connolly's anti-imperialism (and seeks to identify with Lenin's concept of anti-imperialism) loses sight of the vital need to see national and social oppression as *separate* tasks requiring specific tactics within the overall strategy for workers' power.

Allen's failure here, and in his discussion of Connolly's break with reformism, reflects all too accurately strong similarities in principle between Connolly's brand of revolutionary Marxism and the SWM itself. For both share a political method that has no means of linking the immediate day-to-day issues with the practical struggle for socialism. (Connolly was grasping for new answers to new problems; the SWM, sadly, has been steadily ditching the revolutionary method so hard-won in revolutionary communist struggles which Connolly did not live to see.)

SWM agitation reflects the existing level of consciousness of the working class, essentially trade union struggle, combining it, as Connolly did in the immediate issues of his day, with abstract socialist programmes. It is revealing, surely, that nowhere in his book, in spite of Allen's argument that Connolly is defined as a revolutionary Marxist because of his break with reformism, is there any discussion, of what precisely constituted this break within the Second International itself.

Brief references are made to the Left in the International, to the different "brand of Marxism of the Bolsheviks". The conclusion makes the briefest mention of Connolly as having embraced syndicalism because "here was a strat-

egy that seemed to connect the immediate struggle of workers to the goal of socialism", but this only emphasises Allen's overwhelming silence on the *transitional* method whereby Bolshevism, Luxemburg, Trotsky and Lenin creatively found their way out of the morass of the minimum-maximum programme to the direct struggle for power.

Protestant Working Class

His account of Connolly's reaction to the Home Rule crisis of 1912-14 and the rise of Orangeism is instructive here. Allen correctly states that Connolly wrongly understood Orangeism as no more than "a hangover of a settler community" whose persistence in the 20th century "was seen entirely as the result of manipulation by the landed elements" (p.104). Yet, later, he argues that in his response to the crisis of Orange reaction among workers, "Connolly's position as a political method of fighting Orangeism left an invaluable historical legacy" (p.112). What was this? First, Connolly called for "special propaganda for the conversion to socialism of Orangemen" and then "The second way of breaking Protestant workers from Orangeism was in the course of the class struggle". He then provides examples of Connolly's involvement in a number of strikes which saw Catholic and Protestant workers united. Allen had earlier criticised Connolly's syndicalism for failing to understand the limits of trade union consciousness. This is what he said: "Connolly assumed that a trade union view of the world and socialist consciousness were one and the same. However, this is not necessarily the case... it does not, however,

automatically clarify the role of the state or indicate the way workers should relate to other elements in society" (p.71). Precisely! And yet, and even in spite of the evidence which he quotes (p.112) where one of

cannot transcend. We can see this even more in his analysis of Connolly and syndicalism. Connolly's support for, and eventual embrace of De Leonism, poses problems for Allen's schematic belief that Con-

SLP a simon-pure sect preaching abstract socialism, of the maximum programme unable to relate to the mass of workers. For all its revolutionary theory, as we have seen, it offered no practical challenge

within the Second International. These were the answers to the sterility of the Second International's minimum-maximum programme. It is only against *them* that one can seriously evaluate Connolly's development.

Beyond Connolly?

Predictably, Allen's only criticism of Connolly's syndicalism is not from these positions but from his own economic notions of 'the party'.

Throughout the pamphlet [Socialism Made Easy] there is an image of Labour as an army with a great evenness and uniformity in the ranks where both industrial division and varying levels of consciousness among workers have disappeared. However, the argument for a party rests precisely on the unevenness in the working class. It is for this reason that the socialist minority needed to organise independently to win over the majority of their fellow workers." (p.73).

But this is not an alternative to syndicalism—after all Connolly had spent his political life up until 1908 in parties ideologically homogeneous, organising independently to "unify the consciousness of the masses"—they were bankrupt like the Second International in general.

Ironically for Allen, his notion of the party merely repeats at the political level, Connolly's own syndicalist errors about industrial unionism and organisations generating socialist consciousness. As Lenin had argued in *What is to Be Done?* against such notions as Allen's, what defined a revolutionary party is its programme and its method by which its vanguard cadre was trained to intervene and lead in the spontaneous class struggles of the masses to raise them to the level of the conscious struggle for power. Allen's failure to programatically advance beyond the weaknesses and ambiguities at the heart of Connolly's legacy is in a very real sense the failure of the politics of the SWM.

While the rest of the book makes important points, if essentially the same as the IWG's (about Connolly's views on religion, his response to the Lockout in 1912, his response to 1914, the analysis of the War and 1916) Allen tells us:

"In a very real sense, then, the Irish left needs to recover the politics of James Connolly. His description of Partition as a carnival of reaction to be fought vigorously; his dismissal of gas and water socialists such as William Walker who put minor electoral gains above an opposition to Loyalty; his notion of a working class leadership of the national struggle, all are of continued and direct relevance. They stand today as the basis for a revolutionary socialist position today in Ireland" (Introduction).

Sadly, such bland pieties cannot do duty for applying in Ireland the revolutionary theory and programme enriched by the priceless lessons of 80 years of international class struggle.■



the strikes of the proletariat was broken by the intervention of the Protestant clergy, Allen argues that pure trade union struggle for wages and conditions, plus abstract propaganda for socialism, is the valuable historical legacy to fight loyalism! Predictably, all Connolly lacked, says Allen, was a political organisation!

But this method sums up perfectly the politics of the SWM, tailing the trade union struggles of the day while offering bland socialist propaganda. No wonder they see Connolly as having established a tradition which they

nolly's early development was ever more leftwards until finally he embraced syndicalism in 1905. In fact, De Leon and the Socialist Labour Party, were even more sectarian than the SDF with which Connolly broke. So Connolly's move in that direction can in no sense be seen as a healthy move simply because De Leon (Allen writes) "was one of the first to recognise the growing tendency towards reformism inside the socialist movement and to argue for an independent organisation of revolutionaries" (p.57).

The move reflected, despite Connolly's real disgust with the SDF chauvinism of Hyndman, his own sectarianism and abstract socialism which in Ireland had led to the collapse of the ISRP as it would lead to the collapse of De Leonism in America.

Connolly's attachment to revolutionary syndicalism in 1905, Allen believes, was the supreme point of his itinerant leftwards, away from reformism, that is, the recognition for the first time of the power of organised workers and trade unions, the method of direct action and the sympathy strike, the goal of the general strike to paralyse and destroy the power of the bourgeoisie. But, "paradoxically", Allen then states, by 1908 as he embraced revolutionary syndicalism even more firmly, Connolly moved rightwards.

Syndicalism has been associated with the extreme left in its rejection of parliamentary and reformist politics, but we have already seen that it carried within it a reduction of the political debate to one of what type of union was required. This could only mean blurring the distinction between reformist and revolutionary politics. Connolly was led by syndicalist views to a new tolerance of reformist politics" (p.78).

But this empty formalism evades all the real questions. Up until he was won to syndicalism, revolutionary politics meant for Connolly and the

to reformism, sharing its minimum programme, and tailing reformist parties to whom the mass of workers looked. In practice, it too "blurred the distinction between reformist and revolutionary politics" because it lacked a real living revolutionary theory and method for the struggle of the masses.

Allen acknowledges that revolutionary syndicalism did self-consciously reject parliamentary and reformist politics—in fact its reliance on self-organisation, direct action, solidarity, were a thousand times more effective in challenging reformism in practice—in spite of its economic and inadequate theory—than all the propaganda of Connolly and De Leon. The move to revolutionary syndicalism was, therefore, the first real practical step Connolly took out of the politics of the sect.

The real questions are what kind of revolutionary politics, what idea of revolutionary programme in particular, and what kind of revolutionary organisation embodying it, was necessary, starting from the enormous practical lessons of syndicalist mass struggle to transform the unions and lead the masses in the struggle for power.

Allen laments "now [1908] when the first stirrings of a more widespread discontent with the traditions of the Second International were emerging, Connolly was in retreat to a broad church approach to organising". There is not a word about what issues raised the discontent within the Second International.

The nature of the imperialist epoch, growing imperialist rivalry, the importance of the mass strike and revolutionary unions, the strategy of the direct struggle for power linked to the immediate and partial struggles of the day, the birth of soviets and especially the notion of the vanguard party armed with a scientific programme to lead the masses—these were the real contributions of the Left

hardly suggests 'theoretical clarity'!

All the more strange then that in a work written by a self-proclaimed Trotskyist, in which copious reference is made to the most obscure texts, Allen can find nothing to say whatever about the first extended analytic treatment of Connolly's ideas by a revolutionary Marxist and Trotskyist organisation in Ireland—over 50,000 words in eight articles published by the IWG—even if he had never borrowed its essential ideas!

It is beyond a shadow of a doubt to any disinterested reader that Allen has substantially borrowed the IWG analysis.

It provides him with, as it did the IWG, a critical revolutionary Marxist standpoint to evaluate the remaining corpus of Connolly's political ideas and practice on Gaelic Ireland, on the Irish Volunteers and '98, on religion, on women, his involvement in 1916 etc.

Much of what he has to say on all of these too, we believe, is in debt to the IWG analysis.

As the reader of our articles and book will be frequently reminded, the IWG published its work as a contribution to debate, and with an invitation to all on the left and republican movement to enter into debate. Sadly Allen's method works in the opposite direction—that of sectarianism.■

Plagiarism

Allen's book is, of course, a political biography and differs in major respects from the IWG's book which is a detailed theoretical analysis of Connolly's ideas. But we have no hesitation in branding Allen as a plagiarist, incapable of an elementary intellectual honesty that should be instinctive in anyone remotely concerned with truth, let alone those who claim the mantle of revolutionary Marxism.

We believe that Allen's refusal to acknowledge our work cannot simply be dismissed as the predictable act of the petty sectarianism for which the SWM is notorious. This organisation—constantly adapts to its political surroundings, in the manner of all *centrist* groups on the far left. Without the benefit of the IWG's rigorously Marxist analysis of the flawed structure of Connolly's innovative "republican socialism", neither SWM nor Allen could have arrived at his published critique.

Allen's non-acknowledgment of this substantial source enables him to conveniently imply that his own book is the only one written "from a Marxist revolutionary socialist position"—against what he identifies as

three opposed categories of assessment of Connolly. These he names as the 'sanitized' Connolly of Irish nationalism, the 'Stalinist' Connolly of Greaves and the CPI, and the revisionist Connolly of Austen Morgan and the Workers' Party 'Academics', whose work Allen describes as "the clearest theoretical attack on Connolly's legacy".

This is an odd accolade, for a number of authors who, over a period of 15 years or so have failed to produce any sustained critique of Connolly beyond Bew's eight-page (!) essay in *Worsted in the Game* (Brody). The rest of their output including the chapter on "The State in Northern Ireland", referred to by Allen, adds up to relatively brief assessments of selective aspects of Connolly's politics in texts devoted to other topics entirely.

Austen Morgan, the one revisionist author who has attempted a wholesale reassessment of Connolly, Allen dismissed as: "writing from an academic anti-revolutionary position [Morgan] has nothing to contribute to this process" (Review in *Socialist Worker* no. 48, June 1988, p.8), a judgement which

GET ORGANISED Against Any New PNR

Support Trade Unionists & Unemployed Against the PNR (TUUAP)

TUUAP is a group of activists who have come together to campaign within the trade union movement for a NO vote on any proposals for a new Programme of National Recovery. Support it!

Contact TUUAP, c/o 10 Comyn Place, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. Tel. 01-375760

**Abortion
Information
Helpline**

**Telephone
01-794700**

**Irish
Workers
Group**

Class Struggle

No New Deal With Haughey!

IN THE COMING three months trade union leaders will pull out all the stops to get a new deal with the Dublin government to restrain wages. And they will use every deception necessary to put it over on their members.

The ruling class, faced with the threat of increased competition from the more open EC market and the growing prospects of a major world recession, will be more determined than ever to defend their profits at workers' expense. The savage cuts and threats of closure at Waterford Crystal, the Irish Press and Gateaux are only a foretaste of their determination.

The union bureaucrats, with top salaries higher than Government ministers, are determined to protect their own privileged social position as brokers between capital and labour by making sure there will be no scope for real struggle from below. They must demonstrate to the capitalist state that they remain an essential component of its economic order.

Their record under the present Programme for National Recovery has been every bit as shameful as that of the British union leadership which, at the recent TUC, at last formally accepted Thatcher's outlawing of the freedom of workers to struggle in defence of their livelihoods. In Ireland their collaboration with the bosses has been doubly hypocritical. The deal with Haughey was carried out under the pretence that Irish workers were lucky to have the co-operation of Haughey and thus supposedly escaped extreme attacks of a Thatcherite kind! What a lie!

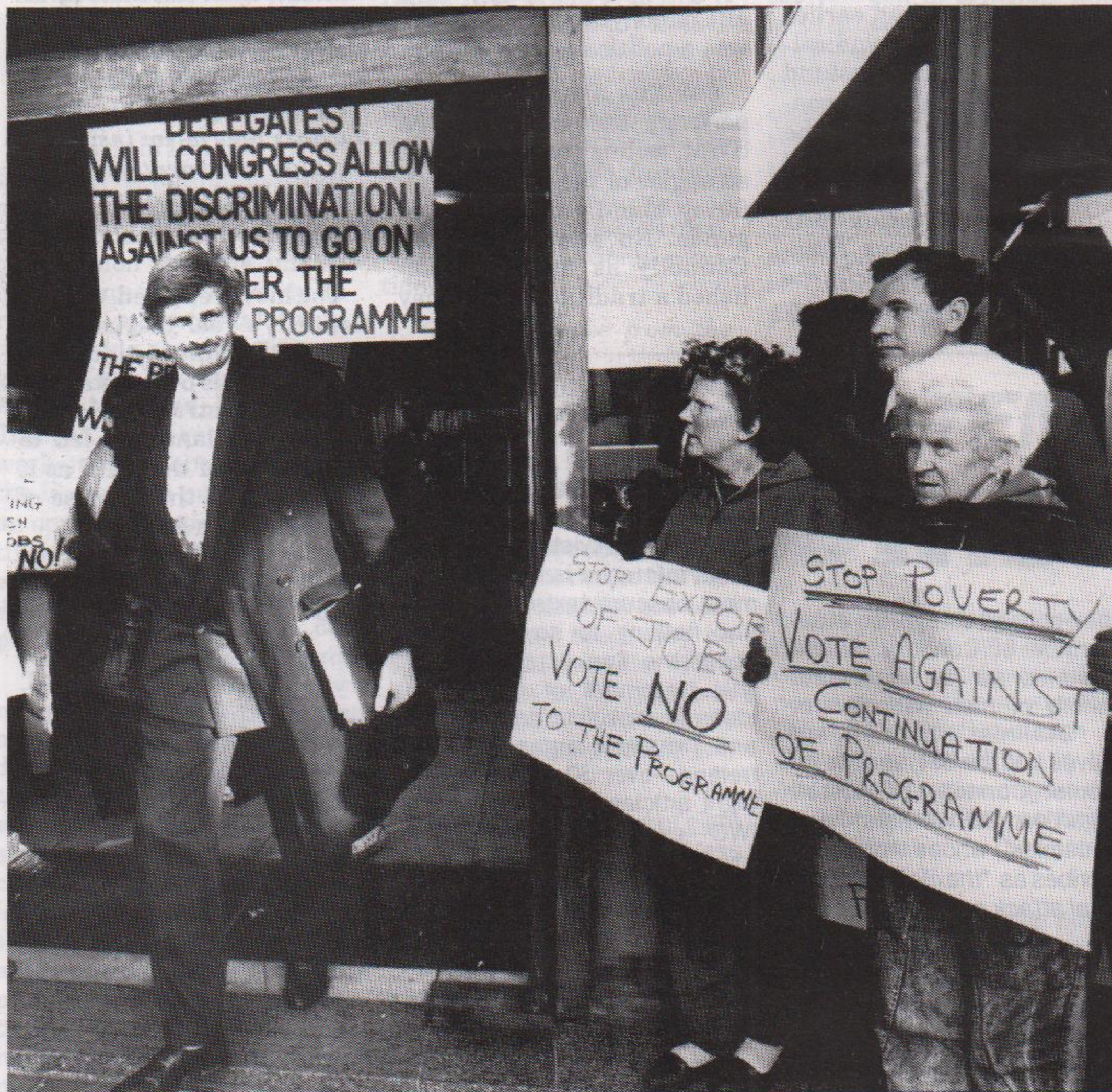
In fact the ICTU bureaucrats have helped initiate the kind of restrictions implemented by

Thatcher. The new Industrial Relations Act, which they called for and supported, is the clearest example. And rather than be pushed by legal measures the union leaders actively initiated compulsory secret ballots, increasingly isolated from democratic debate, and introduced in SIPTU postal ballots which are formally isolated from any collective democratic life in the union.

Workers' demonstrations against health cuts, for example, were called off to allow the talks that produced the present deal with Haughey and they welcomed the procedures which got rid of 10,000 public sector jobs. Yet Jimmy Blair, ICTU president, claimed at the recent annual conference that "the trade union movement had succeeded in limiting the worst effects of the cuts". ICTU decided over the heads of the unions to cease their traditional opposition to privatisation, yet Attley warns that we must have another wages pact with Haughey to keep him from privatising state companies!

Biggest Deception

But the biggest deception was on jobs. Union leaders constantly claimed that real gains were being made, that the programme was really achieving national recovery. In fact employment has only shown a tiny increase despite a boom in profits. What gives the lie to the defenders of the PNR is the fact that over 100,000 Irish workers who could not get jobs here emigrated while registered unemployment at home



Workers tell SIPTU supremo, Bill Attley, what to do with his Programme for National Recovery.

only dropped from 240,000 to 220,000. For these 'gains' workers completely sacrificed their independence of action to the bureaucracy. The real decline in conditions for the working class, of course, must take into account the shift to low-paid and insecure jobs, the savaging of health provisions and cuts in education, the selling off of public housing and the huge leap in house costs etc.

'National Recovery' has only meant, and could only mean,

recovery for the bosses. And from that point of view Haughey has done well in beginning to control the foreign debt, at working class expense; and to control public spending, at working class expense; and to raise profits and business confidence, at working class expense. Advised by supposedly 'left' wing union officials such as Brian Anderson of MSF (who were not prepared to draw real battle lines against the ICTU Executive), the new tactic is to call for a 'two-tier' deal in which unions may negotiate locally

what level, they do not say.

How To Fight Back

Open democratic debate and discussion in every workplace organisation is vital in the struggle. The bureaucrats will try and avoid it like the plague. Activists must demand space in union journals to answer the deceitful propaganda of the bureaucrats who frequently deny the opportunity for any arguments counter to their recommendations to be disseminated. The rank and

file must be leafletted with the alternative case in good time and meetings convened to debate out the issues before any ballot is taken. Fight for ballot boxes to be brought to workplaces and voting rights in general be available only at the meetings! And, given the open admission of some of the bureaucrats that there was head-office manipulation of ballot boxes in some quarters in the last PNR vote, the rank and file must demand concrete measures of inspection and counting to guarantee against trickery and fraud.

Secondly the bureaucrats are calling for a minimum wage law. Having trussed up the rank and file with no-strike clauses since 1973, having concentrated all union power in their own hands, no real struggle has been waged on the wide scale necessary to enforce minimum wage norms in wide areas of services, agricultural labour, and among concentrations of women workers. Isolated and heroic struggles have been paraded by the bureaucrats—and left isolated or called off, among women cleaners, retailing or fast food workers etc. etc.

Now they make noises about a minimum wage law—but at

file must be leafletted with the alternative case in good time and meetings convened to debate out the issues before any ballot is taken. Fight for ballot boxes to be brought to workplaces and voting rights in general be available only at the meetings! And, given the open admission of some of the bureaucrats that there was head-office manipulation of ballot boxes in some quarters in the last PNR vote, the rank and file must demand concrete measures of inspection and counting to guarantee against trickery and fraud.

Homage

Despite all the mealy-mouthed homage paid to the 'secret ballot' by the bureaucrats, the raising of these issues will help explain why the open show of hands after debate is the only reliable democratic method in normal circumstances, while preserving the right to a secret ballot for exceptional situations of widespread mistrust.

But what must be at the heart of our alternative case? An adequate alternative has to propose the fight for an alternative leadership in the unions, and the transformation of the unions into fighting organisations committed to use industrial strength for the broadest unity in struggle, the strong supporting the weak, to defend the interests of the working class on jobs, wages, social welfare and public spending.

That means beginning now to build rank and file action groups which can link up within employment sectors, unions and nationally to challenge the bureaucrats and to demand that they put all official union resources behind rank and file action...

- For a legally binding national minimum wage not less than £200, indexed to general wage levels
- For full compensation for all price rises in take-home pay
- For real wage increases.
- Equal pay for women workers
- For social welfare benefits to be raised to at least the minimum living wage
- For a massive scheme of state-financed useful public works at union rates, under workers control as the only answer to mass unemployment
- For direct action to block all attempts to privatise state enterprises in whole or in part
- For immediate restoration of all cuts
- For steeply progressive taxes on wealth and capital
- Cancel the national debt of £23 billion which has already been paid in interest to Irish and international financial parasites!